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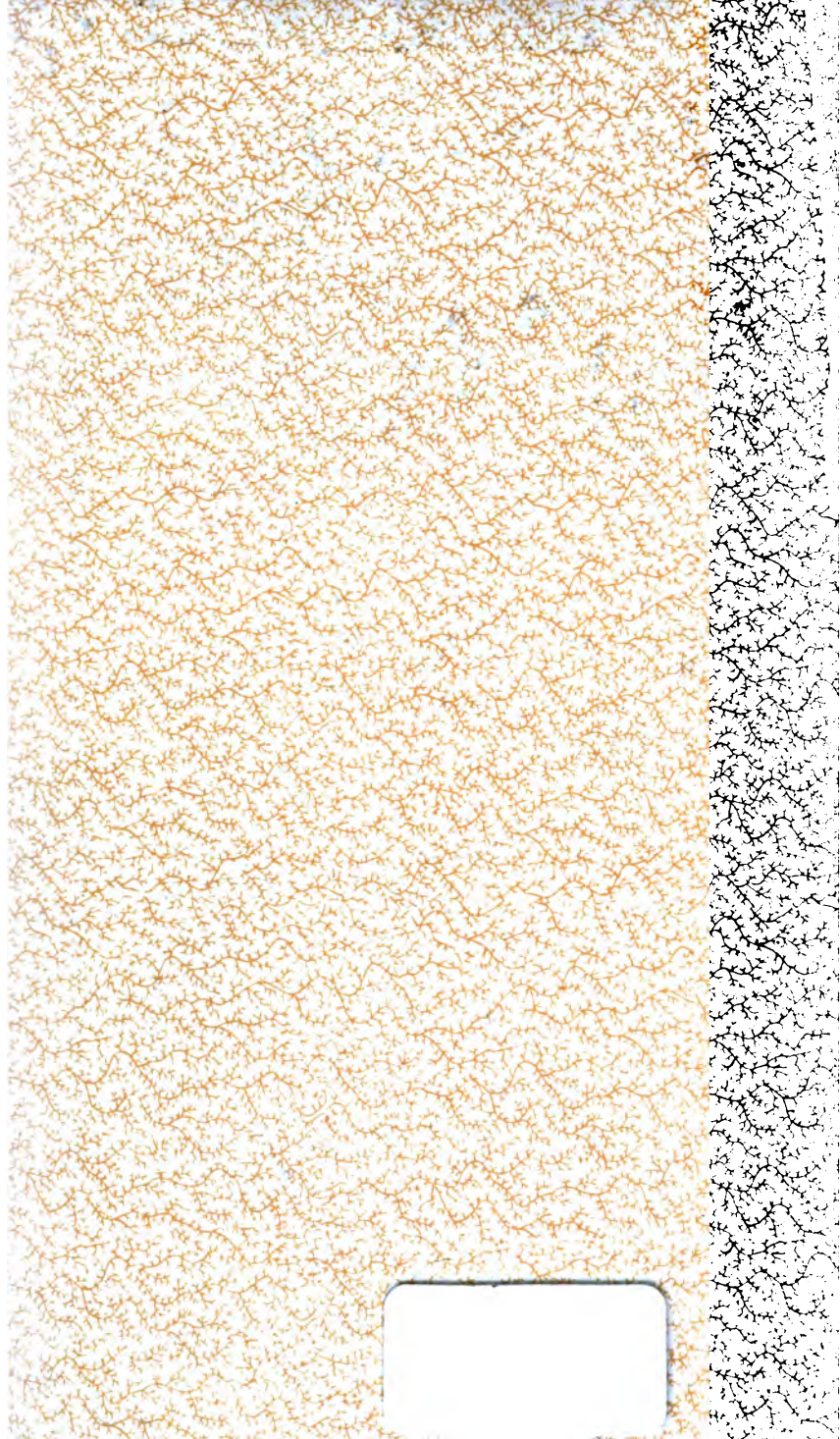
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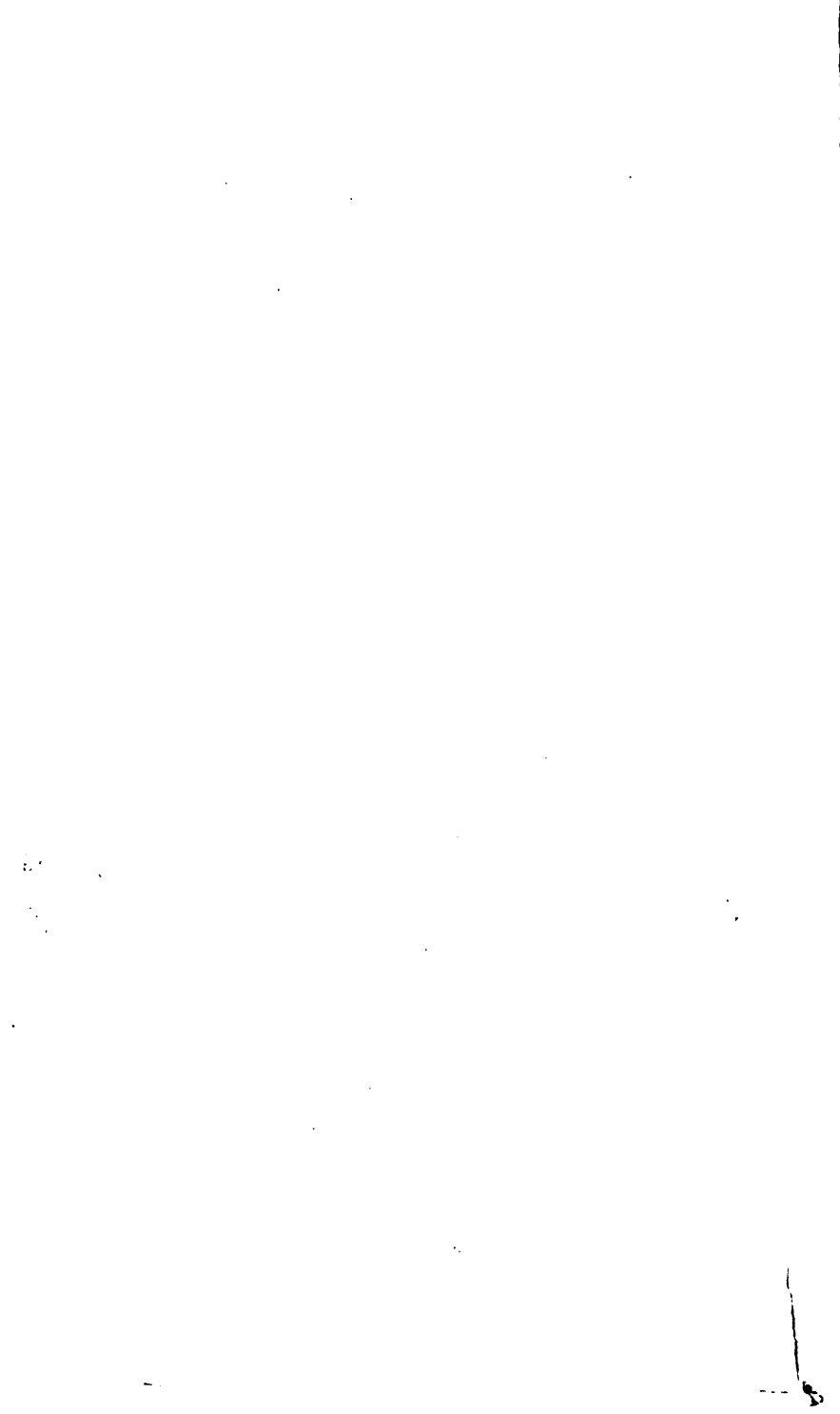
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N. P. C.









L E T T E R S  
 FROM AN  
 ENGLISH TRAVELLER  
 IN  
 SPAIN, IN 1778,  
 ON THE  
 ORIGIN and PROGRESS,  
 OF  
 P O E T R Y  
 IN THAT KINGDOM;

With occasional Reflections on MANNERS and CUSTOMS;  
 And ILLUSTRATIONS of the Romance of DON QUIXOTE.

A D O R N E D W I T H  
 Portraits of the most eminent Poets.

*Sed idem*  
*Pacis eras, mediusque belli.*

L O N D O N;

Printed for R. BALDWIN, PATER NOSTER ROW;  
 And sold by PEARSON AND ROLLASON, BIRMINGHAM.  
 M. DCC LXXXI.

Dillov.  
 NPG



## E R R A T A.

- Page 25, line 3, for *Gemblacensis*; read *Gemblacenfis*.  
 52, line 3, for *Don Don*, read *Don*.  
 57, last line of note for *Ovihueta*, read *Oribuela*.  
 87, last line, for *Bracenses* read *Bracharenfes*.  
 125, verses; line 4, for *veres* read *veces*.  
 131, line 4th, of verses, for *ninguno duo*, read *ninguno*.  
 134, line 14, for *satyr*, read *satire*.  
 159, line 16, for *Cetinia*, read *Cetina*.  
 166, last line for *winquesfort* read *wiquesfort*.  
 270, line 14; for *Elvina*, read *Elvira*.  
 288, line 1st, for *not only*, read *she not only*.

### Directions for the Plates.

- Plate 1st, Don Francisco de Quevedo, to face the title.  
 2nd, Garcilaso de la Vega, to face page 159.  
 3d, Don Alonso de Ercilla, to face 222.  
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## P R E F A C E.

**S**O many English travellers have of late published their remarks in their respective tours through Spain, that it is not without the utmost deference that the present Letters are offered to the public; as not only the most remarkable objects in that kingdom have been fully described, but we have moreover had catalogues of greek and latin books in libraries, lists of pictures, and circumstantial accounts of buildings, both Roman, Gothic and Saracenic, annexed to the various incidents of travelling.—Another writer has had recourse to the very rocks and mountains, has dug into the bowels of the earth, and visited the mines, describing the subterraneous kingdoms of nature, as well as the various trees, and plants that cover the surface of that extensive country. What then remains to the present writer? or how can he flatter himself with presenting any new matter worthy the attention of his readers, that will stand the test, before the piercing eye of criticism? yet methinks whatever may have been the cause, whether from bad roads, wretched inns, or extravagant price of provisions, in the course of these different peregrinations; the mountain of Parnassus has not been visited by the curious traveller, and the spanish muse has tun-



ed her lyre without being disturbed by the unhallowed step of the rambling stranger.— Should this be the case, and that the author should have preferred the Castalian spring to the tempting juice of the La Mancha grape, he still claims indulgence for the many imperfections of the following sketch, while he truly dreads the charge of intoxication from these shallow draughts! \* at the same time he acknowledges to have taken rather a cursory view of Don Quixote's library, and some poems are not mentioned such as the *Austriada* of John Rufo, *The Tears of Angelica*, *The Fortune of Love* of Antonio Lofrasco of Sardinia, with some others praised by Cervantes. However transient, the merit of these may have been, it is not so with an ingenious and burlesque poem intitled the *Moschea* by Joseph de Villaviciosa, which should not be forgotten, though not particularly mentioned in this work: the poet has described with infinite humour and pleasantry the inconveniences arising from that troublesome insect the moschetto: a new edition of it was lately published at Madrid and dedicated to our ambassador then at that court, Lord Grantham, evidently

\* See Pope's Essay on Criticism.

## P R E F A C E. v

manifesting in the person of that accomplished nobleman, a sensibility of the impartial and refined Judgment of the British nation, of which the Spanish muse seemed desirous to court the particular favour and applause.

It has been said by a great and learned French writer " that the Spaniards have but one book, and that one, shews the ridicule of all the others." How far such a general reflection appears strained and tinctured with national prejudice, I shall leave to others to consider : --- wishing to reverse so severe a sentence, I now stand before the court of Apollo, and petition for a hearing. Can we avoid doing that justice to the surprising genius of Lope de Vega, the contemporary, and in a manner rival, of our immortal Shakespeare ; or can we refuse encomiums to the learned and unfortunate Quevedo ? to whom we may fairly apply the lines of Pope in favour of one of our own poets.

To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,  
And ev'ry author's merit but his own.

To those who may be pleased with poetical numbers, a few specimens are added of the different kinds of Spanish versification. With respect to the judgement passed on the several poets,

## vi P R E F A C E.

poets, I have followed the opinions of their own countrymen, and I further acknowledge my particular obligations for this purpose, to two Spanish academicians, Don Lewis Joseph Velazquez, Knt. of the order of St. James, in his Essay on Spanish poetry; and to the new Spanish Parnassus, of Don John Joseph Lopez de Sedano, Knt of the order of Carlos Tercero; as well as to the posthumous Memoirs intended for the history of poetry and Spanish poets, by the late father Sarmiento, a learned Benedictine, from whose valuable writings I have selected much information: still the field is so ample that a great deal remains unexplored: I have in a manner only traced the skeleton of a gigantic figure, whose proportions, like the Farnesian hercules, are more easily admired, than described. If therefore from want of abilities equal to the subject, I am deficient; I shall think myself amply rewarded, if on the whole, it may not be thought, I have already said too much, and that I do not fall under the imputation mentioned by Swift of some writers, when he says, "The most accomplished way of using books at present is, to serve them as some do lords, learn their titles, and then brag of their acquaintance."



L E T T E R S  
O N T H E  
O R I G I N  
O F  
S P A N I S H P O E T R Y.

L E T T E R I.

*Voyage to Barcelona.—College of Trobadours.—  
Castilian language described.*

DEAR SIR,

BARCELONA, 2d MAY, 1778.

WHEN I took my leave of you  
at Genoa, and embarked  
in an English vessel for Barcelona,  
I left you reading Petrarch. You  
may recollect I informed you how  
much that illustrious poet had con-  
tributed to polish and improve the  
Poetry of Spain, where he had nu-  
merous admirers, as well as imita-

B

tors,

tors, who introduced his metre into their language, though not without opposition at first, from national prejudice.

You acquainted me that you had already begun to read Don Quixote in its original language, and the celebrated Spanish translation of the Aminta of Tasso, by Jauregui, found in Don Quixote's library, and so highly praised by Cervantes. You requested my opinion concerning the Poetry of Spain, with some information relating to their Poets, the time when they flourished, and where their works were printed. Sensible how unequal I am to the task, I promised however to give you in the course of my tour, a slight sketch of the Origin and Progress of national Poetry  
in

## SPANISH POETRY. 3

in that kingdom, to trace its vicissitudes through the mazes of history and conquest, after the irruption of the northern hive, and succeeding invasion of the Saracens; finally, its improvement from the Trobadours, as well as flourishing state under the kings of Castile: particularly after they had driven out the Moors and discovered a new world, furnishing additional scenes to the fancy of the poet, and unexplored regions to the elegant pen of the historian.

I arrived at this famous city after a pleasant passage of seven days. Our vessel was filled with a motley collection of passengers, consisting of Spanish tumblers returning to Valencia, Italian actresses and fidlers, recruit-

#### 4      O R I G I N      O F

ing serjeants, pilgrims, and friars. As the weather was fine, we were continually entertained upon deck with the shrill fife of the soldier, the jarring sound of a dissonant guitarre, the din of the castanets, with the *fandango* dance, and the love songs of the actresses; all which were occasionally interrupted by the grave discourse of a venerable friar, who had lived many years at Rome, and was now returning home wrapt up in monastic forms and regulations.— We had some blowing weather in crossing the gulph of Lyons, that gave a pause to our mirth; but the sea became smooth like glass, as we drew near to Barcelona, when the pleasing sight of the coast, with the verdant hills in the blooming May, enraptured

enraptured the eye, while the fanning breezes wafted us forward, and our chearful companions made this little voyage the most pleasant I had ever performed; thus we entered the harbour in triumph, amidst the exultations of our jolly bacchanalians, who made the hills echo with their vociferation.

So much for music. Let me now return to the poets, for I am already on classic ground, and the seat of the muses. It was in this city that a college was first founded for the Trobadours, who were settled here towards the end of the fourteenth century, by John the 1st king of Aragon, who sent a solemn embassy to France for the purpose, desiring assistance

## 6. ORIGIN OF

from the society of Trobadours at Thoulouse, in order to introduce the *Gaya Sciencia* into Spain, a request which was immediately granted; and two principal persons were sent to Barcelona, where they formed an establishment: but before I take up the Poets, I must say a few words concerning the language, as the groundwork on which this superstructure was to be raised.

The common language of Spain is called *Castilian*, or *Romance*. This is what is printed in books, and spoken at court, and in the universities. The city of Toledo was considered the standard, when the residence of the monarchs; but now Madrid undoubtedly bears the palm. This

is

is

## SPANISH - POETRY. 7

is the language that prevails in the two Castiles, Leon, Aragon, Estremadura, Andalusia, Navarre, Rioja and the mountains of Burgos; in all which places it is common, with more or less purity, attended with an accent called *Tonillo*, but without any variety of dialect. It is not so in Asturias, Galicia, Valencia and Catalonia, where they have a provincial dialect, infomuch that the Castilian language is not universal, though generally well understood, and written in all parts, except in the mountains of Navarre and Biscay, where it is neither spoken, written, nor understood by the common people, who have a different language of their own, unconnected with the Castilian; but this is not



## 8 ORIGIN OF

the case in Catalonia, Valencia, and Galicia, the dialects of which are corruptions of the latin as well as the Castilian; of course the affinity of the latter has been closer, and its progress more extensive.

From such a diversity of dialects it is natural to suppose that no modern language abounds more than the Spanish with foreign expressions, owing to the variety of nations that have visited that kingdom, conquered it, or become subject to its dominion; which makes it difficult to trace the origin of its words, and has swelled the dictionary of the Spanish academy to six volumes in folio, which is yet thought so deficient, that the first volume has been reprinted with considerable

## SPANISH POETRY. 9

siderable additions, for whoever attempts an etymological work of this nature, must, exclusive of modern languages, possess a rich fund of oriental literature, added to a perfect knowledge of latin and greek, a judgment of which may be formed from the specimen exhibited by the learned Cobarruvias (*a*). If then we suppose the Spanish language to be divided into 100 parts, sixty must be allotted to latin, ten to greek, ten to the goths and northern nations, ten hebrew and arabic, and ten german, italian, and french, with the new words imported from the East and West-Indies.

(*a*) Tesoro de la lengua Castellana o Espanola, por Don Sebastian de Cobarruvias Orozco. Madrid, 1611.

In the year 1300 there were five national languages spoken in Spain, viz, the Castilian, Lemosin, Portuguese, Galician, and Biscayan, in their respective provinces; while the following dead languages were equally common, viz, the hebrew amongst the Jews, the arabic amongst the Mahometans, and the latin and greek amongst the Christians. Aldrete has fairly proved in his book on the "Origin of the Castilian language," that it never existed as a distinct language prior to the invasion of the goths, and that it owed its origin to a corruption from the latin, though the exact time could not be fixed. Several parchment inscriptions and poems having been discovered and dug up in Granada in the sixteenth century, weakly attributed to St. Cecilius a dis-

## SPANISH POETRY. 11

a disciple of St. James, and supposed to be coeval with the days of the apostles; yet written in the Spanish language; these were alleged with an intemperate zeal against Aldrete, who, dreading the iron hand of superstitution, and not daring to contradict the blind notions of his countrymen, unwilling at the same time to give up his opinion, he fell upon this singular device, "that these writings were delivered in a prophetic strain," and thus avoided the contest. These monuments of gross and bigoted credulity were carefully sent to Rome to be examined, where they have since been finally condemned, and the business is now at an end (a). We need

(a) Papebrochius, in his Life of Ferdinand the saint, for the 30th of May, has given a full account of these Granada poems; even the reading of them

not then be surprised at their ignorance in other matters relating to the antiquities and history of their country. Father Sarmiento, a learned benedictine, complains, that there are several hebrew and arabic books, relating to Spain, with which his own countrymen are totally unacquainted; adding that *Albupharage* was translated by an Englishman, *Elmacin* by a Dutchman, and the *Geographia Nubienfis* by a Maronite, being all arabic compositions, which, without absolutely belonging to Spanish history, are replete with a variety of matter that greatly serves to illustrate its history and geography. But let

was prohibited in 1641, and they were finally condemned in 1682. "Memorias para la historia de la Poesia y Poetas Espanoles. Por El Rmo. P. M. Martin Sarmiento. Madrid, 1775."

SPANISH POETRY. 13

me not involve you in such a chaos. I have already exercised your patience and let me rather entertain you with this agreeable climate, so particularly inviting at this season of the year.

I have made an excursion to the famous mountain of Montserrat, the wonder of naturalists, which our english travellers in Spain have sufficiently described. I speak of it only in a poetical style, as it has been celebrated in heroic verse by Christopher de Virues of Valencia, whose poem of *Monferrate* I send you herewith, which makes it unnecessary for me to add any more on the subject. You may remember this poem was also in Don Quixote's library, and preserved

## 14      O R I G I N      O F

preserved from the flames. Should this find you reading that incomparable romance, observe that I have just been on the spot near the walls of this city; where the Bachelor Sanfon Carrasco, alias the intrepid *Caballero de la Blanca Luna*, overthrew in single combat the unfortunate hero of *La Mancha*, and gave the finishing stroke to his extravagant adventures.

Adieu.

L E T T E R

## LETTER II.

*Latin poets in Spain after the conquest of the  
Romans, and under the Goths.*

BARCELONA, 12th MAY, 1778.

**A**S you proposed to set out immediately for England, and to pass with the utmost expedition through France, I hope I shall soon hear of your safe arrival, as it will be some time before I can join you. Whatever may be the novelties and pleasure arising from travel, the mind naturally preponderates towards home, and I seldom pass a day without casting a wistful eye towards England, and enjoying, in private,  
the



the pleasing expectation of returning to my own country, and once more with rapture, to hail fair Britannia!

I find, since I came here, that I had a narrow escape, and that if I had been longer at sea, and obliged by any accident, to put into Marseilles, our ship would have been seized and ourselves become the dupes of a perfidious and inveterate enemy! but thank God we have had the good fortune to avoid their deceitful wiles.

Having mentioned to you the defeat of the hero of *La Mancha*, you will perhaps expect from this place a scene on the gallies, similar to the one described in so lively a manner in *Don Quixote*, but those days  
are

are past at Barcelona; the harbour has long since been choked up with sand; the plans offered to remedy this defect have been rejected; and though the city and port have lately been beautified, this place is only frequented by small vessels, and the arsenal which served for those gallees, formerly the terror of the Moors, is now converted into a foundry of cannon, where I have seen them busy at work. The corsairs are well apprized of this alteration; for the day I entered Barcelona, I saw two of their cruisers stand close in to the mouth of the harbour, with an exulting indifference.

I have spent my time very agreeably in this place, and have been of se-

C

veral

veral chearful parties in the neighbourhood. I have laid in a provision of good *Mataro* wine, which is a red wine little inferior to *Port*, and considerably cheaper, and have had the pleasure to drink your health in a bumper of excellent *Sitges*, by far the best of all the Catalonian wines, which in general have a roughness, with a certain *gout de terroir*.

Previous to my departure for Valencia, I resume my favourite subject, and entertain you with the poets after the conquest of the Romans, and under the Goths, as introductory to what I shall say of the Castilian muse when I come to illustrate its different eras, under its monarchs, till the succession of a  
french

## SPANISH POETRY. 19

french prince to the throne of Spain. I shall point out the various *Cancioneros*, or collections, that have been made of the Poets, the Spanish translations of the greek and latin classics, and italian poets, as well as the Spanish writers who have professionally treated of the art.

We read that the natives were fond of poetry time immemorial, and cultivated it with singular delight. Silius Italicus relates, that the people of Galicia composed and sung verses in their original tongue. Strabo extols the ingenuity of the *Turdetani*, and says that they had histories and poems, as well as laws written in verse, when it was first applied, as Horace says, to soften the manners,

and introduce order and decorum into civil society. As to the primitive language of Spain we are still in the dark concerning it; if we give it a greek or phœnician original, a similar genius of poetry will naturally follow; if it should be compared to the hebrew, which neither you nor I understand, I must refer you to a learned british prelate, to whose refined and classical taste we are indebted for a just idea of the poetry of that people.

After Spain had been conquered by the Romans, it insensibly became the seat of the muses. Gaius Julius Hydruntinus, the freedman of Augustus, and according to Suetonius, a Spaniard by birth, was the intimate friend of Ovid, and is said to be the author of the

## SPANISH POETRY. 21

the astronomical poetry that goes under his name. In the same age flourished Sextilius Hena, of whom Seneca speaks but indifferently, taxing him with being more ingenious than learned, and so flighty and unequal withal, that he seemed to fall into the bombast and fustian which Cicero takes notice of in the poets of Cordova, who perhaps had a peculiarity of manner and diction, such as even Livy the historian could not divest himself of. The city of Cordova produced three good poets under that monster Nero, the two Senecas and Lucan. The tragedies of Seneca are the only latin ones extant of the ancients. Martial of Bilbilis, now Bumbola in Aragon, lived under Domitian. He mentions several

other poets that made a figure in his days ; such as Unicus, his kinsman, whose brother was also a poet, Caninus of Cadiz, Decianus of Merida, and Licianus also of Bilbilis. From this time down to the emperor Constantine, the poetic vein seems to have greatly declined. Juvenius, a priest, put the gospel into hexameter verse, and was the first ecclesiastical bard. Arator translated the acts of the apostles into hexameters, and was followed by Sedulius. Latinus Pacatus, in a panegyric on the emperor Theodosius, declares, that Spain abounded in valiant soldiers, eloquent orators, and excellent poets. St. Jerome speaks of Aquilius Severus, a Spanish poet, who flourished under Valentinian. Prudentius, who lived in the fourth

fourth century, is equally read for the harmony of his numbers, as for the information he gives of the church history of his time.

We now come to the fifth century, when the savage goth overrun the dominions of Spain; though we must not charge these invaders with the ignorance and barbarity of the age, or make them the only depoulers of that taste which the romans had left with the Spaniards. A more powerful cause operated on the mind: The gloom of superstition universally prevailed, the ecclesiastic poet full of holy zeal for religion, was afraid to break in on its mysteries, and his genius was cramped; without a spark of poetic fire he writ



## LETTER III.

*Journey to Valencia. Latin Poetry under the  
Saracens. Library of Don Gregorio Mayans.*

VALENCIA, 22nd MAY, 1778.

THE badness of roads, the want of post-horses and carriages with the inconvenience of miserable inns, are common topics for travellers in this country; but we must attribute it rather to their gothic laws and bad policy of government, than to the natural disposition of the people. Till the old tenures are abolished, as well as the variety of shackles with which industry is fettered, the traveller must bear every thing  
with

with patience ; for otherwise, he only offers an idle and useless complaint ! In every town and village the privilege of keeping an inn belongs to the lord of the manor or the corporation. If a private person without authority was to make the attempt he would incur a severe penalty, and be immediately punished. Thus the privileged innholder fleeces the passenger with impunity, that he may pay an exorbitant rent to the landlord, besides a considerable premium at entrance. In many places this occupation is deemed a public office, which every one in his turn is obliged to discharge, sometimes for a term of three years. When the lot happens to fall on an indigent peasant, what comfort can be found under his roof ?

roof? How can such an inn be provided with furniture, and what sort of beds are to be expected from a man, who wrapped up in his cloak has slept all his life on the ground? But this is not all: provisions are another monopoly. It would be highly criminal for an inn-keeper to have a larder, or even wine in his cellar; every thing must be purchased at appointed places, where the wearied traveller must go or send his servants; and even then seldom finds what he wants; at these places, disdain and scorn is the least he is to expect, added to the reception of an enemy rather than a friend, and he curses the landlord, his house, and his country; for which reason the natives, who know what they have to expect, seldom stir  
from

from home, unless urged by the utmost necessity; by which means the country is inhospitable, and the traveller as much at a loss as in the deserts of Arabia.

Under these forbidding circumstances, animated by that insatiable passion, curiosity, I hired a carriage at Barcelona, drawn by mules, having previously provided myself with a kettle, knife, fork, and spoon, napkins, and a little stock of coffee, chocolate, tea, sugar, &c. with a camp-bed, and other field equipage; thus I sallied forth in quest of adventures, having obtained a permit from the Captain-general of the province to travel with fire-arms, which was inserted in my passport, and in this manner,

manner, travelling at the rate of about twenty miles a day, I arrived happily at this pleasant city, delightfully situated near the sea, in a beautiful vale, so highly esteemed by the Moors, that they fondly conceived paradise to be seated in that part of heaven which hangs over it. No wonder then if the poetic vein should partake of the happy influence of the climate, and the Valencian muse be so remarkably inspired.

In my last letter I am afraid I overpowered you with dulness, in wandering through the dark ages of gothic barbarity and ignorance; we now draw near to a more brilliant epocha, the invasion of Spain by the Saracens in the eighth century; which brought

brought about a further revolution in the understanding of men, as well as in dominion; since with the arts and sciences, the Arabs introduced a new strain of imagery to enliven the fancy of the poet; the muse partook of its bold metaphor and lofty flight, robed in the splendid garb of fiction, decked with oriental pearl, and heightened with all the powers of imagination. Without tracing the remote origin of poetry from the songs of the gothic bards or the islandic scalds, the poetical field becomes animated, and the Rhunic enchantments feeble and dim, when compared with the boundless luxuriance of the East: however, we must not lose sight of the latin muse, when in quest of her Castilian descendant, but once more  
behold

behold her with her dishevelled locks, disguised under gothic drapery. Amongst these was Theodolphus, bishop of Orleans, in the eighth century, though a native of Spain, whose poems have been published in France by father Sirmond: those of Alvaro of Cordova, in the ninth century, and of Ciprian, arch-priest of Cordova, have been preserved in Spain by the late father Florez, a learned monk and celebrated antiquary. — Were it necessary, I could soon swell the list, for at that time poetry seemed to inflame every breast; Alvaro of Cordova particularly speaks of it, as a ~~valuable~~ amusement and pastime, in which Stoltzlogius and himself had wasted much of their youth. It is from these writers, and the imperceptible  
decay

decay of the latin tongue, that we must trace the first dawn of the Castilian muse ; concerning which I mean to entertain you, when I have ranged a little further in this delightful spot, and beheld the variety of landscapes, with which the bounteous hand of nature has every where enriched this charming and beautiful country.

In the course of my rambles amidst orange groves, immense plantations of mulberry trees, and various pleasant gardens, I have in vain sought for the *Olivera de Valencia*, mentioned in Don Quixote. That famous and venerable tree, celebrated by floral games and rural sports, now exists no more, though the olive is cul-

D

tivated



tivated with the greatest assiduity and yields excellent oil. Hearing that there was a vessel in the road of Valencia, bound for England, I have sent you a jar of oil ; and some excellent olives, which though perhaps not so luscious as those from Andalusia, that Cicero was so fond of; yet I hope may still find a place at your table. The culture of the olive is general in all this part of the country. The method of propagating it, is still the same as mentioned by Virgil :

“ Quin & caudicibus sectis mirabile dictu

“ Truditur e sicco radix oleagina ligno.”

GEORG. 2. V. 30.

I have had the pleasure to become acquainted with the learned and courteous Don Gregorio Mayans, formerly

ly

ly librarian to the king; who now lives here, having a good estate in this country, and to his politeness I am much indebted for many civilities, as well as great information. To give you an account of his numerous writings in almost every branch of literature and jurisprudence, would fill a volume. You have read his life of Cervantes, annexed to the Carteret edition of Don Quixote. He is now writing the life of Virgil, and is possessed of a most curious and valuable library, chiefly of the writers of his own country, with many scarce manuscripts, and a numerous collection of the old Spanish translations of the greek and latin classics. He is now in a very advanced age, but still preserves vivacity and a most af-

fable disposition, added to a surpris-  
 ing application. During the in-  
 trigues of the jesuits, who were afraid  
 of him, his house and library were  
 invested by an armed force; dragons  
 broke into his study, and took away  
 many of his books by authority.  
 Oh, happy England, where the prop-  
 erty of individuals is sacred, and  
 where the least violation of liberty  
 meets with a spirited and just resent-  
 ment from the people, of which we  
 have lately had so striking an instance  
 in a case of this nature. Such is the  
 public spirit of our country, that if  
 the most flagitious character is attack-  
 ed either in his person or freedom,  
 to say, we have even such a power to be  
 oppressed, the tutelary genius of li-  
 berty guards the injured party with  
 her

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her shield, in hopes that a due sense of her protection, may correct the heart and reform past errors;---but Don Gregorio Mayans is just at my door, and I must bid you farewell.

**LETTER**

## L E T T E R      I V.

*Attachment of the Spaniards to the Arabic numbers. Literature of the Spanish Jews.*

VALENCIA 28th MAY 1778.

**A**S I postpone making you acquainted with the Castilian muse till my arrival at Madrid, I cannot refrain from troubling you with some further reflections on the faracens, tending to elucidate the influence which their government had over poetic numbers. The very faces of the present inhabitants carry such a striking resemblance of their ancestors, and the african cast of feature is  
so

so perceptible, that I am insensibly led into this subject.

It being common for the vanquished to receive laws from the conqueror, it was natural that Spain should share the fate of arms, and receive with the faracén yoke their manners and customs. These people having held a long possession of this country, introduced their language, religion, and literature. The oriental style of poetry pervaded every mind, and the exuberant genius of its composition not only became universal, but in a manner worked the downfall of the roman numbers. Alvaro of Cordova, complains that the Spaniards had so totally forgotten the latin tongue, and given the preference to arabic,

that it was difficult even amongst a thousand people, to find one who could write a latin letter. So great was the attachment of the people to the chaldaic books, and the literature of the orientals, that they could write arabic with remarkable purity, and compose verses with as much fluency and elegance as the arabians themselves. Not only charmed with their poetry, they even embraced their religion; for Isen, king of Cordova, who died in 795, had three thousand apostates from christianity, in his train.

Thus after a long period of near eight hundred years that the dominion of the arabs continued; the provinces of Spain split into numerous dynasties, flourished in oriental literature.

rature; whilst the Castilians distinguished themselves in feats of arms, and were spilling their blood in defence of their territories; honour and love were sung by the bards, and the arabic muse furnished a numerous list of poets, whose names are recorded in the *Bibliotheca Hispana* of Don Nicolás Antonio; the oriental dictionary of Herbelot, and the arabic hispanic collection of manuscripts in the escurial, lately published at Madrid, by Casiri, a Maronite, in two volumes in folio, at his catholic majesty's expence; where a numerous collection of poets may be found, hitherto unnoticed, all which are carefully preserved in the valuable library of the escurial. In this class the province of Andalusia particularly



ly distinguished itself; its inhabitants seemed animated with a peculiar brilliancy of composition. The two academies of Cordova and Seville shone beyond others. Their writers introduced harmony and numbers into the most serious subjects, leaving nothing either in religion or politics, nor in any branch of polite arts which did not partake of their verse and poetical enthusiasm. Ebn Tarhun of Seville who flourished in the year 691 of the hegira, raised his muse to the most sublime themes; he sung of the creation of man; of the soul; and described the temple of Mecca. Dhihaldin Alkazary who flourished in the sixth age of the hegira, writ a poem called "the treasure of poets"; while others employed themselves in  
comments

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comments on their most classical writers. Ebn Forgia, who lived in the fifth age of the hegira, writ a commentary on the famous poet Almotuabi, and Ebn Macrana commented upon the poem on animals by the persian, Abiotman. Nor were the powers of versification confined to the men, but extended equally to the fair sex; several ladies gave proofs of their talents, those of Andalusia in particular, did honour to the muses, and their works are preserved in the escurial; but none were more famous than Maria Alphaifuli of Seville, who was the Sappho of her time,

Besides these celebrated geniusses, the fame of many others has been preserved in the dictionaries of arabic

#### 44 . . . ORIGIN OF

Arabic Spaniards, compiled by mahometan writers : such as the dictionary arabic and hispanic, in the escorial, of all the caliphs, captains, philosophers, poets, and learned ladies of Spain, in four large volumes, by Ebn Alkhali Mahomed Ben Abdalla in the year 710 of the hegira. Likewise the history of all the Spaniards and Africans, famous in arts and sciences, particularly in poetry, written by Ben Mahomed Abu Nasser Alphath of Seville, who lived in the sixth age of the hegira ; which book is in the king of France's library. Thus the arabic muse flourished while supported by the cimeter, and totally perished with its empire, when the victorious arms of Ferdinand and Isabella drove the moors out of Granada.

It

## SPANISH POETRY. 45

It is to those days we must also look up, to form an idea of the literature of the Spanish Jews, which was cherished by Masters from Babylon, where they had academies supported by themselves; at a time when books were so scarce in Spain, amongst christians, that in the beginning of the tenth century, one and the same bible, with St. Jeron's epistles and other ecclesiastical works served different monasteries. In the year 967, Rabbi Moses and his son Rabbi Enoch, having been taken by pirates, were sold as slaves at Cordova, and redeemed by their brethren, who established a school at Cordova, of which Rabbi Moses was appointed the head, who being desirous of returning back to his own country, the

the moorish king of Cordova would not give his consent, rejoicing that his hebrew subjects had masters of their own religion at home, without the necessity of receiving them from a foreign university; and every indulgence was granted them with respect to their worship, exhibiting a true spirit of toleration, worthy to be followed by their christian successors.

In the year 1039, Rabbi Ezechias was put to death at Babylon, who had succeeded Hai Gazon, whose sons fled to Spain, by which the eldership of the Gaons became extinct, and their college was transferred to Cordova, from whence a swarm of hebrew poets issued forth, that have been noticed by various learned writers.

ters. Our countryman Thomas Hyde in his treatise *De ludis orientalibus*, mentions a hebrew poem on the game of chess by Aben Ezra.

In Portugal, Rabbi David Ben Solomon Ben David Iachisa of Lisbon who lived in 1440, writ a treatise on hebrew poetry, which was translated into latin by Genebrard, and printed in 1587, at the end of his *Ifagoge*, to read hebrew without points; it abounds with quotations of the different metres of the hebrew poetry in Spain. They may be very sublime, but for my part I cannot read the language, either with points or without, and you will pardon this digression: however it gives us an idea of the flourishing state of their schools

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schools in Cordova, Seville, Granada, and Toledo, and we need not be surpris'd at the numerous hebrew proverbs, and modes of speech, that have crept into the castilian language, and form a conspicuous part of its phraseology; for though king John II. banish'd the Jews out of his kingdom, and the rigid and cruel inquisition was afterwards established to purge the nation of that sect, yet all the horrors of that bloody tribunal, have not been able completely to effect this sanguinary purpose.

The Spanish language owes these people a particular obligation; for that curious version of the hebrew books of the old testament, which  
long

long after their expulsion they first printed at Ferrara, in 1553, in a gothic-spanish letter. A curious and scarce book, comprehending many energetic words, and peculiar expressions, not to be found in the dictionary of the Spanish academy, and which they seem to have cautiously avoided. This version is thought to have been made by that learned grammarian, David Kimchi, in the tenth century. Father Sarmiento has given many critical and judicious reasons for attributing this version to the age of Kimchi, and censures father Simon greatly, for saying it was made at the time it was printed, when scarcely understood by the Jews, *quam vix Judæi intelligunt*. But you will say I am now going on at an extravagant rate. Should

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this



this find you safe returned, as I hope it will, remember me to my reverend friend, your brother; tell him what he loses in not studying Spanish, and if he smiles at the conceit, remind him of Gaspar Lindenberg, who has written *de non contemnendis ex lingua hispanica utilitatibus theologicis* (a).

Having now furnished you sufficiently with hebrew, arabic, and gothic-spanish information, and poured in upon you a legion of hard words, added to a variety of uncouth and harsh-sounding names, I shall in my next touch upon the proceedings of the *Trobadours*, and then set out for Madrid. Meanwhile I take my last farewell of jews and mahometans.

(a) See Bibliotheca Græca, of Fabricius.

## LETTER V.

*Proceedings of the Trobadours in the kingdom of Aragon, until its union to the crown of Castile. Character of the Marquis of Villena, an eminent poet.*

VALENCIA, 31<sup>st</sup> MAY, 1778.

**F**ROM the mistaken laws and notions concerning inns on the road, you will entertain a very indifferent idea of the interior police and government in towns in this country. Valencia, however, in this respect, deserves some exceptions, and I was not a little surprized at my return to my inn the second night after my arrival, to see the city guarded by a

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patrol,

patrol, the men carrying lanthorns and poles in their hands like our London watchmen. This regulation is owing to the patriotic spirit of Don Don Joachin Foz, a worthy magistrate, who proposed it for the relief of a number of poor men, heretofore employed in the making of fireworks, a considerable branch of industry in this capital, till a late proclamation abolished them all over the kingdom. To find bread for a number of distressed families, he hit upon this laudable expedient. They walk the several streets from eleven at night, till five in the morning, crying the hours and the weather, and keeping the peace as with us; but as this fine climate is seldom obscured by dark nights or cloudy mornings, the serene atmosphere

atmosphere only affords them a monotony of expression, and the word *sereno*, becomes their constant clamour; from whence they have acquired the name of *Sereneros*, which added to the stillness of the town, recalled to my mind the beautiful night of Milton:

" Silence was pleased: now glow'd the firmament

" With living sapphires: Hesperus that led

" The starry host rode brightest." —

I have now an opportunity of improving myself in the poetry of the *Trobadours*; for the language of this country is a dialect of the provençal, and introduced itself with their verse in all those parts where their numbers prevailed; such as the counties of Languedoc, Roussillon, and Barcelona; kingdoms of Valencia, Murcia, Majorca, Minorca, and Sar-

dinia; where it remains to this day. The Spanish writers boast of their *Trobadours* as high as the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. William de Berguedam, a Catalan baron, was a *Trobadour*, and his poems are preserved in the vatican library, (a) as well as those of Nun de Mataplan (b); they also rank Raymond Lulli, of Majorca, in this class: but without looking so far back, I shall not go higher than the fourteenth century, when John the first, king of Aragon, who was also a poet, invited the *Trobadours* to settle in Barcelona, as we learn from Zurita, the learned and classic historian of that kingdom. The fifteenth century produced the celebrated Ausias March and James Roig, both of Valencia; the works of the former have been

(a) Codex 3204, 3205, and 3207.

(b) Codex 3204, and 3207.

turned into Castilian verse; the latter vented his spleen against women in a satyrical piece, called *Espil*, or "the Looking-glass," which seems to have been imitated by Prior. To court afterwards the favour of the fair sex, Roig sung the immaculate conception of the Virgin. This poet was physician to queen Mary of Aragon, wife to Alfonso the fifth, and lived to be near a hundred years old. Though there are five editions of his works, none are later than 1562. The following lines may serve as a specimen of his style :

Noranta cinch  
 O cent anys tinch  
 Dels quals cinquanta  
 O los sexanta  
 Del meus millors  
 Penes dolors  
 Man espletat.

In the sixteenth century, Peter Seraphi distinguished himself in the Valencian dialect, and his poems are prefixed to an edition of Ausias March, printed at Barcelona, in 1560. Many other bards are spoken of, though the exact period when they lived cannot be ascertained. Among the rest, Arnau Catalans (a), and Molla (b), whose works are in the vatican library, Mossen Narias Vinyolles (c), Vincent Ferradis, Don Franci de Castelor, Miguel Perez, Juan de Verdancha and Mossen Bernardo Fenollar, of all whom, there are provençal

(a) Codex 3205.

(b) — 3207.

(c) The appellation of Mossen is peculiar to Valencia, in imitation of the French word *Monfieur*, in the same manner the Italians stile a foreigner *Monfu*.

poems in the *Cantionero General* printed at Antwerp, in 1573. Fe-nollar was a native of Catalonia, and in that dialect, wrote in couplets, a poem on the "contemplation of Christ" printed at Valencia, in 1493. They value themselves greatly in this city on their early knowledge of the art of printing, when it was not in use in any other part of Spain; and shew a latin dictionary, entitled, *Comprehensorium* (a), and a Sallust, printed in 1475: So that they soon followed

(a) The *Comprehensorium* has the following sentence at the end: "Præfens hujus comprehensorii præclarum opus Valentiae impressum, anno. m,cccc,lxxv. Die vero xxiii. mensis februarii finit feliciter."—The university in the city of Valencia was founded in 1470, two other were afterwards founded in the same province, viz. in the city of Gandia, in 1549, and at Ovibuela, in 1555.

the



the example of Oxford, where we find a book printed in 1468(a), which was several years before Caxton practised that art in England.

The provenzals generally made use of the hendecasyllable verse : their poems consisted chiefly of sonnets, pastorals, and love songs, which gave rise to a poetical tribunal, termed, *the court of love*; consisting of a select number of eminent poets, who decided all controversies amongst themselves on these subjects. The *Trobadours* were chiefly of the prime

(a) This book is in the public library at Cambridge. The title is, *Exposicio Sancti Jeronimi in Simbolum Apostolorum ad Papam Laurentium*. At the end, *Explicit exposicio, &c. Impressa Oxonie & finita, an. dom. m,cccc,lxviii*. — See *History and Art of Printing*, by P. Luckombe, M. T. A. London, 1771.

nobility of the kingdom ; at length they carried the poetic licence so far, as to give much scandal to the public, and even to taint the reputation of the palace, as well as of the ladies of the court ; for to make these entertainments more sprightly, they invited minstrels, strollers, and buffoons, which in some measure justified the precautions taken afterwards against them. However the kings of Aragón, Don John the 1st, Don Martin, and Don Ferdinand, reformed these poetical consistories, and brought them into high reputation, in which the last mentioned sovereign was greatly assisted by his kinsman, Don Henry of Aragon, Marquis of Villena. These monarchs assisted in person at their assemblies, where the  
verses

verses of the candidates were recited, and the premiums distributed with all the magnificence and splendor of royalty. The poets who had gained the prizes were crowned with laurel, amidst the acclamations of the spectators, added to the joyful sound of musical instruments, succeeded by an elegant repast: they were then conveyed home with a courtly attendance, and presented with an exclusive privilege to sing, and read their verses in public at pleasure: a noble institution! the continuance of which was so ardently wished for, by that immortal genius, Michael de Cervantes, the contemporary of Shakespear, and I will almost venture to add, in every respect his equal.

The

The muses seem to have taken great delight in the kingdom of Aragon. At the coronation of king Alfonso the fourth, in 1328, the Infant Don Pedro, earl of Ribagorza, and brother to the king, attended by the principal nobility, exhibited dances and a variety of pastorals, and songs, composed for that pleasing event. The *Joglar*, or poet Ramufet, sung a pastoral song composed by the earl; and Novelet, another *Joglar*, recited a poem of six hundred verses by the same royal hand. The attachment to poetry seemed hereditary in the royal line of these princes, and continued in the Marquiss of Villena, who composed the *Arte de la Gaya Sciencia*, for the use of the college of *Trobadors*, besides many other poems, which were

greatly

greatly admired, and frequently recited in public.

An historical poem of all the poets of Aragon, has been since composed by Don John Francis Andres de Ustarroz, historiographer of Aragon, in imitation of that of the great Lope de Vega, of the poets of Castile. Ustarroz completed his in 1652, and thought first to entitle it *Parnasso Aragones*; but he altered his mind, and called it *Aganipe de Los Cisnes Aragoneses, celebrados in el clarin de la fama*: but it never was printed, and still remains in manuscript in the king's library at Madrid.

The union of the crown of Aragon with that of Castile, in the person of  
king

king Ferdinand the fifth, who married Isabella, heiress of Castile, seems to have eclipsed the fabling of the *Trobadours*. The Aragonians and Catalonians adopted the Castilian dialect, when the influence of that kingdom prevailed, and the cultivation of its language and manners paved the way to honour and preferment. The poet Boscan, of Barcelona, tuned his lyre to the genius of Castile, and though a few bards attempted to support a languishing muse, Miguel Perez and Juan de Verdancha, of Catalonia, introduced the Castilian metre and rhyme into their verse. — About this time Columbus discovered a new world for the arms of Castile, which gave such a splendour to its court, and dignity to its language, that the Castilian muse shone like a new constellation

in

in the firmament! the wonderful exploits of intrepid heroes engrossed universal attention; the boundless love of fame immortalized the gallant foldier, while the sordid view of lucre dishonoured the adventurer, though it replenished the kingdom with gold. This unexpected event gave rise to a variety of passions. The nation was roused; the great empire of Montezuma ceased in America; the Spanish standard was displayed in the new world; and the effeminate *Trobadours*, and their songs, were entirely forgotten.

It remains for me, however, to say something of the Marquis of Villena, whose great character appears conspicuous in the poetical annals of his country;

country; being in a manner the father of poetry in Spain, as well as the brightest ornament of his age. This illustrious nobleman of the royal house of Aragon distinguished himself early in poetry, philosophy, and astrology, and with such attachment to this last science, that amongst his ignorant countrymen he generally passed for a necromancer. As his family had been dispossessed of the marquisate of Villena, Henry III. had given him the earldom of Cangas, and afterwards procured him to be elected grand master of the military and religious order of Calatrava. For this purpose the marquis obtained a divorce from his wife under pretence of a natural impediment; then ceded the earldom of Cangas to the

F crown,



crown that it might not fall into his order at his death, and was elected grand master: some of the knights however protested, and elected Don Luis de Gusman, a castilian nobleman; but the king went in person to Calatrava, put the marquis in possession, and every thing was quiet till the death of the king, when Guzman who had fled to Rome renewed his claim before the pope, and the knights refused further obedience. A long suit was commenced, which lasted six years, and was referred to a general chapter of the order of *Cister* held in Burgundy. - Whilst this was depending, the marquis attended on his uncle Don Ferdinand of Aragon when he succeeded to that crown, and came with him to Barcelona, where

where he presided at the consistory of *Trobadours*, and writ a theatrical piece; in which, justice, truth, mercy, and peace, were the principal characters. In the midst of these rejoicings news came in 1414 that he had lost his election, and was deprived of his grandmastership, with an injunction to cohabit again with his lawful wife, which he complied with, and became a suitor at the court of king John II. then an infant, for an indemnification for his earldom of Cangas. After much solicitation he obtained the lordship of Iniesta, where he retired with his wife, and gave himself up to philosophy and the muses. Besides a translation of Dante into prose, he translated the *Æneis* of Virgil in Spanish verse, at the

request of his kinsman John king of Navarre, and intended to dedicate it to that monarch, for which purpose he had affixed a painting, in which the king of Navarre is represented sitting on his throne, and the marquis presenting him his book; but when all this was compleated, he dropped his design, as that monarch went to war with the king of Castile, on which account he avoided all further communication with him. His most famous piece was his book on the *Gaya Sciencia*, which is a complete system of poetry, rhetoric and oratory, besides describing all the ceremonies of the *Trobadors* at their public exhibitions. This work he dedicated to his illustrious and learned friend the marquis of Santillana.

After

After suffering much from the gout; he died in retirement in 1434; his fine library was burned under the notion of his knowledge of magic, and the bishop of Segovia, confessor to the king who was charged with this commission, is said to have reserved most of the books for himself.

Thus ended this great philosopher and friend of the muses, who was contemporary with our poet Lydgate, and had just reached the days of the renowned Chaucer, the father of english poetry, whom he greatly resembled. With him he ran the career of courts, and experienced the fickleness of royal favour, equally preferring retirement and study, and like him, had the merit of refining

the language and poetry of his country. Thus the names of both bards have been jointly handed down with veneration, by a grateful posterity! If their verse wanted melody, it was owing to the inaccuracy of measure, and imperfection of language at that time, when both the English and Castilians seem more to have courted the god Mars, than Apollo; for while the Castilians were daily encroaching on the Moors, the victorious banners of England were triumphant in Paris, where our Henry VI. was crowned king of France.

Alas, poor Macias! trusty esquire of the grand master Villena, hapless bard, should I forget thee! who didst sing of love, and feel the smart of its embittered arrow: imprisoned for excess  
of

of passion, after the fair object of thy love had been disposed of; and had given away her hand in thy absence: loaded with chains by Villena for the follies of youth thou fellest sudden, when bewailing thy fate; the Galician muse strewed flowers over thy tomb, thy verse is treasured up in the escorial, and the portuguese bard claims thee as a parent, for this was thy song:

Cativo de Mina tristura  
 Ja todos prenden espanto,  
 E preguntan, que ventura  
 Foy, que me atormenta tanto.  
 Mas non se no mundo amigo,  
 Que mais de meu quebranto  
 Diga, desto que vos digo  
 Que ben fee nunca devia,  
 Al pensar que faz folia.

Cuyde fubir en alteza  
Por cobrar mayor estado,  
E cay in tal pobreza,  
Que moyro desemparado  
Con pesar e con desefo  
Que vos diray malfadado,  
Loque yo he ben ovejo  
Quando o loco cay mays alto  
Sobir prende mayor salto.

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LETTER VI.

*Journey from Valencia to Madrid—Battle of  
Almanza.—La Mancha.*

MADRID, 12th JUNE, 1778.

**I** NOW date this from Madrid,  
where I arrived after a journey  
of nine days from Valencia, by the  
new road lately made from that city to  
this town, which is every where mark-  
ed out and rendered passable, though  
not compleated farther from Madrid  
than the town of *Ocana*, nine leagues  
from hence ; so far the road is excel-  
lent, and has mile stones ; but when  
the remainder will be finished, or  
the intended canal of Castile, for  
inland



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inland navigation be compleated, no one can tell; for while the family compact has its sway, and they waste their treasures in schemes of boundless ambition; they are only grasping at a shadow and impoverishing their people. It is true, they have not as yet taken off the mask, and keep still an ambassador at our court; but for my part, I have no doubt of sinister designs which will soon appear evident; and that the ideas of Castilian honour are phantoms, by which we must not suffer ourselves to be deceived in a political light, whatever notions we may have been induced to form of individuals.

In the course of my journey to this place, I passed over the plains of

*Almanza*

*Almanza* where a pillar proclaims the victory of the French and Spaniards over the allied army in 1707, when most of the English were killed or taken prisoners, having been shamefully abandoned by the Portuguese horse at the first charge, and the success of that day fixed the crown of Spain on Philip Duke of Anjou, father to the present king, adding new dominions to the restless and ambitious house of Bourbon.

Our soldiers spilled their blood in that war, as they had done before in that cause. In the reign of Charles the II. the English troops obtained a compleat victory at the battle of Evora, and took the rich tent and all the baggage of Don John of Austria,  
the

the Spanish general; for which our Charles generously ordered the sum of forty thousand crowns to be distributed among the soldiery.—What do you think was the largess of our magnanimous ally?—Three pounds of snuff to each company! which when given to the English soldiers, they tossed up in the air out of contempt and disdain (a).

(a) The following passage from a judicious writer, shews the obligation of the Portuguese nation to England so fully, and carries such conviction with it, that I am induced to make the quotation. “I have seen, he says, a large collection of privileges granted by several kings of Portugal to the English beyond those enjoyed by the Portuguese subjects, I know not whether I may call them *charters*. These were copied from the archives of the kingdom in the *Torre del Tumba*, but the most antient was of king Ferdinand whose reign began not till 1367. There are several of John the First, his successor, some of which

I was

I was musing on this subject, and had bewildered myself in political reflec-

refer to others granted by his predecessors. By this it appears that the English had a great hand in setting up the kingdom of Portugal, and if the historians of this country deceive us not, they had as great a share in protecting and securing it, as often as it hath been brought into danger by a foreign enemy. Twice it was like to be wholly over-run by the Castilians, who had possessed themselves of the greatest part of the kingdom, and gained a numerous party of the nobility over to their side, and had been very near taking Lisbon itself; the first time in the reign of Ferdinand, the last of the lawful descendants from Alfonso Henriquez, the other time while John the First, from whom all that had succeeded him derived their titles, was struggling for the crown, and they have been as often relieved by the English and enabled to carry the war into the enemy's country; our princes of the blood condescending to go in person to their assistance, first Edmund Langley Earl of Cambridge, and afterwards John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster; and if after the several flourishing reigns that succeeded, they were at last reduced under the Spanish yoke, it was because  
tions

tions till I entered the plains of *La Mancha*. There I recovered my good humour ; saw many a fat laughing Sancho, drank good wine at *Cuidad Real*, spent a night at the village *del Toboso*, the residence of the peerless Dulcinea ; saw the windmills which the distracted Quixote mistook for

they were wanting to themselves, the English having sent out a gallant fleet and army to their rescue, under Don Antonio, whom they had made their king, but they would not accept deliverance, and so they remained under the power of their enemies. Those small forces sent by king Charles, after his restoration, by their unparalleled valour, soon put an end to the quarrel, and the victories obtained by their means being seconded, as they were, by the vigilance, dexterity and conduct of the same king's ministers, recovered Portugal and restored it to the condition in which it now remains." See "An account of the court of Portugal under the reign of the present king Don Pedro IIId." London, 1700.

giants,

giants, and at a *Venta*, or inn in La Mancha, was pleased with the simplicity of a *Manchega* girl, who waited upon me at supper, and asking her if she had ever heard of such a person as Don Quixote, answered, "O yes Sir, often; they say he is lately dead." But this will not seem extraordinary when I was told of a field Officer, a person of merit, that after long service had risen from a private soldier, who, when in company, and the discourse fell on Don Quixote, said, he had often heard of him, and asked "whether he had not been Colonel of the Regiment of Flanders."

Having been in this capital before, I speak with more boldness of their manners and customs. You must not  
however

## 80 ORIGIN OF

however expect from me details of this sort; or imagine a variety of entertainments, as in London or Paris; or such open scenes of dissipation and luxury as are daily exhibited in those brilliant capitals; but though the walk is more private, I believe the inhabitants, whatever they may be in science or refinement, are not behind hand with them in vice or debauchery, as they are daily lavishing the treasures of Mexico and Peru in private amours, and expence, divested of magnificence or splendour.

A set of gay sparks had lately introduced an assembly for dancing, where the manners of the *Adamites* were followed, and blind fiddlers were employed for greater precaution.---These  
depraved

## SPANISH POETRY. 81

depraved knights were decorated at these revels with a ribband and badge, but they were soon discovered, and rigorously punished. If such is the depravity of youth, you will naturally suppose a liberal and good education is wanting, as well as agreeable and pleasing society, added to those convivial hours, where the wisest man need not be ashamed to be seen; but these are unknown, and though the Spaniards enjoy such a variety of choice, and delicious wines, they seem ignorant of the good qualities of the grape, and if they are seldom taxed with the irregularities of inebriation, they are equally strangers to its generous effusions. Their own countryman Roderic Sanchez, bishop of Palencia, who dedicated his

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history



history to Henry the 4th, king of Castile, says, "that the Spaniards are more inclined to keep their wine in the cellar than to drink it, and chuse rather to sell than partake of it, and that the fair sex and youth dread it like poison(*a*);" inasmuch that if you except the open hearted Biscayners, and a few boon companions of honest Sancho Panza, the circling glass is unknown, and the chearful moment of the poet never thought of, who said

"Nunc est bibendum."----

(*a*) Vinum quoque malunt in cellario quam in ventre, quippe qui vendere potius quam gustare præligunt: fœminæ, vëro, & pueri bacchum ut venenum fugiunt.---Roderici Santii Episcopi Palentini Historia, Hispanica, pars prima, caput iv.

LETTER VII.

*Poetry of Galicia and Portugal.*

MADRID, 20th JUNE, 1778.

**T**HE plains of Almanza had led me in my last letter, into a strain of historical and military reflections, which imperceptibly drew on a political rant, when I intended to speak to you of the galician and portugueze muse, previous to my account of the Poets of Castile, which you will now expect from me, being at present on that classic spot where the mighty emperor Charles held his court; where many of their best poets

G 2

fung,

fung; where Quevedo besides his distinguished talents as a poet, gave such shining proofs of refined wit and profound erudition; and finally, where the ever admired Cervantes first exhibited his unparalleled hero.

The galician muse was distinguished at an early period, though her flights were not lofty, and chiefly supported in the cause of religion, by the numerous votaries who resorted to the shrine of St. James, at Compostella. The poetical turn prevailed so far, as to be the chief employment of both sexes. King Alfonso, the wise, received his education in Galicia, and in that dialect composed canticles for the church, which, with other pieces  
of

of the times are preserved in the cathedral of Toledo. Some of them were published by Zuniga the historian, in his annals of Seville, as far as they related to Alfonso's father, Ferdinand the third, who conquered Seville from the Moors. The poems of Macias, a native of Padron in Galicia, were in that dialect, though taken for Portuguese by Argote de Molina. The poet Juan de Mena laments the tragical end of Macias, as does Juan Rodriguez del Padron in his poem of *gozos de Amor*, "Enjoyments of Love," who was so affected at the news of his death that he retired into a convent, where he ended his days. Garci Sanchez de Badojoz, an elegant poet, speaks feelingly of Macias in his poem *Infierno*

*de Amor*, "Hell of Love," and utters a desponding wish to be interred along with him, and share his reputation, which he expresses in the following pathetic stanza,

Si te plaze, que mis dias  
Yo fenefca mal logrado  
Tan en breve.

Plegate qui con Macias  
Ser merefco fepultado,  
Y decir deve.

Do la fepultura fea,  
Una tierra los crio,  
Una muerte los llevo,  
Una gloria los poffea.

The catastrophe of this unhappy poet, and the imprudence of his passion, has afforded a moral tale to all fucceffive bards ; many of his poems  
are

are in the *Cancionero de Poetas Antiguos* of Juan Alfonso de Baena, in the Escorial, and give a true idea of the galician style of poetry, from whence we may fairly trace the Portuguese idiom, as the conquest and peopling of Portugal under Henry of Burgundy, was effected by people from the north of Galicia, in conjunction with foreigners. Many places in the north of Portugal acquired the same names with those in Galicia, as it happened in England after the coming in, of the Saxons ; Galicia then extended further to the south, including all those districts between the rivers Duero, and Minho, which did not appertain to Lusitania. Ptolemy distinguishes two classes of people in Galicia, the *Bra-*

*cenfes*, whose capital was at Braga, and the *Lucenſes* at Lugo. When Portugal was erected into a ſeparate kingdom, they encroached on the borders, ſo that what had belonged to Galicia, now became Portugal, and under their monarchs a new court ſupported a variation, and gave a national character to their language, of which Bluteau, an Engliſhman, and chaplain to Queen Catherine, conſort of our Charles the 2d, has given a moſt ample and learned vocabulary.

The portugueſe muſe made a figure in the 12th century, under Alfonſo, the 1ſt king of Portugal, in whoſe reign Gonzalo Henriquez, and Egas Moniz, are the firſt poets in the records

## SPANISH POETRY. 89

cords of that kingdom. In the next century, king Dennis was a poet, as was also his natural son Alfonso Sanchez. The 14th century furnished king Alfonso the 4th, a favourite of the muses, whose poems have been collected by father Bernardo Brito. His son king Peter was likewise a poet. In the reign of king John 1st, the Infant Don Pedro composed various sonnets, in praise of Vasco Lobeira, the supposed author of the celebrated romance of *Amadis of Gaul*, of which so much has been said, and who furnished so many admirable scenes to the animated pencil of Cervantes. In the 15th century, Henriquez Cayado distinguished himself under king Emanuel, as did afterwards the Infant Don Pedro, son of king John



2d. At this time the Latin muse was again invoked by the Portuguese, and the purity of the Augustan age seemed to revive with Achilles Stacio, Diego Pereyra, Morais, Coelho, and the jesuit Luis de la Cruz, who wrote some latin tragedies; which made the historian Faria say, that in his country every fountain was an Hippocrene, and every hill a Parnassus. The 16th century produced Bernardino Ribeira, Francisco Saa de Miranda, Michael de Cabedo, the famous comedian Gil Vicente and his daughter Paula, who not only assisted her father in writing his comedies, but also composed others of her own invention. All these flourished under John IIIrd. to whom we ought to add the poets under the reign of the unfortunate king

## SPANISH POETRY. 91

king Sebastian, such as Eustacio de Faria, Geronimo de Corte Real, Jorge de Montemayor, and above all, the illustrious Camoens, whose beautiful poem of the *Lusiad* alone, would have been sufficient, to perpetuate the poetical character of his country ; though Galicia lays a claim to his origin, as descended from a family of that kingdom.

The Portuguese *Cancionero* contains many more poets than the Spanish one, as that of Castile has only one hundred and twenty poets, and that of Portugal one hundred and fifty ; the Spanish one, only includes those of the fifteenth century, that of Portugal goes as high as king Peter, who died in 1367. Amongst others,  
of

of this amorous monarch, accept of the following, addressed to the lady of his affections, whom he styles his second God.

*Mais dyna de ser servida*

*Que senhora de este mundo !*

*Vos soes o meu Deos segundo*

*Vos soes meu bem de esta vida.*

You will think me a book-worm indeed, for looking so far back into antiquity, and after the indifferent account I have given you of society in this place, will conclude that these pursuits waste away all my time, which might be much better employed ; however I do not neglect exercise, and for this purpose have purchased a beautiful Andalusian gennet

gennet, from a gentleman of Cordo-  
 ya, who boasts of its race. Though  
 he would not win a plate at New-  
 market, nor perhaps hold out at a fox  
 chase, with an English hunter; he has  
 nevertheless numerous qualities that  
 give pleasure to his rider; the doc-  
 ility of his temper, the goodness of  
 his mouth, and the agility and quick-  
 ness of his motions, with his elegant  
 shape, form his principal character,  
 while his flowing mane and well  
 furnished tail, added to his stately  
 carriage, give him a noble and grace-  
 ful appearance;—his colour *Isabel*, a  
 name given in allusion to the whim-  
 fical vow, and shift of Isabella Clara  
 Eugenia, governess of the Nether-  
 lands, at the memorable siege of  
 Ostend, which lasted from 1601 till  
 1604,

1604, and who wanted to persuade the ladies of her court to follow her example, which they imitated in having their linen dyed.---As to the swiftness of my courser I must however inform you that he was generated by the wind, and so they all are at Aranjuez, if you will believe the inscription over the king's stables at that place *ex vento gravidas*. If you will not trust to the king's equerry, nor rely upon what has been said by Varro, or Columella, I must refer you to Virgil,

----- Et sæpe sine ullis  
 Conjugiis vento gravidæ, mirabile dictu  
 Saxa per, & scopulos & depressas convalles  
 Diffugiunt.

GEORG. Lib. 3.

P. S. Excuse

P. S. Excuse a digression from a Quixotic traveller, in favour of the famous *Rosnante*, though not generated by the wind, and moreover so steady, that he would not mend his pace if all the mares of the *Dehesa*, or pastures of Cordova, were in company. In the very first chapter, speaking of this steed, the text says, *Que tenia mas quartos que un Real*. The drift of which consists in a pun, upon the double meaning of the word *Quarto*, which signifies a piece of copper money, as well as a defect in a horse's hoof, and as there are seventeen *quartos* in the silver coin, called *Real*, it alludes to the numberless defects in *Rosnante's* hoof, and cannot be literally translated. This passage greatly puzzled Peter Motteux, the publisher

publisher of a translation of Don Quixote, by several hands, in 1733, who alters the sense of it by rendering it thus, "Whose bones stuck out like the corners of a Spanish real." I suppose he had seen some of the old cut Spanish money which suggested this erroneous idea. Smollet has continued the same blunder, and learnedly added by way of note, that a Spanish real is a coin of a very irregular shape not unlike the figure in geometry, called *Trapezium*.

I have now on my table a treatise on farriery, by one of the king's farriers, *The Gibson of Spain*, entitled, *Instituciones de albeyteria por el Bachiller Francisco Garcia Cabrero, herrador, y albeytar de las cavallerizas del Rey. Madrid*

*drid* 1775. In which he gives the following account of the *quarto*. "To explain the reason why this accident is called by the name of a *quarto* I am perplexed, not being certain, nor convinced by the reasons given me by different persons; some say it is because it falls upon the fourth part of the hoof, others, because the animal by this means loses the fourth part of its value; to the first I answer, that I am unacquainted with the exact dimensions of a *quarto*; to the second that if the accident is of the compound kind, though the animal was ever so valuable before, it becomes then not only not worth a *quarto*, but not even an *ochavo*."



## LETTER VIII.

*Origin and progress of national poetry in Castile.*

TOLEDO, 29th JUNE, 1778.

**I** HAVE made an excursion to the city of Toledo, twelve leagues south of Madrid, and dignified with the title of imperial, after its conquest from the Moors, by Alfonso the 6th, who stiled himself emperor, and was crowned here ; since which the city has bore for their armorial ensigns, an emperor seated in a royal chair in his robes, holding a drawn sword in his right hand, and a munda in his left.

I shall

I shall leave to travel writers to describe the numerous edifices and public structures, as well as churches, pictures, and stately monuments to be seen in this place. The cathedral alone would require a volume; amongst its many superb tombs, I particularly noticed that of Don Alvaro de Luna, constable of Castile, the unfortunate favourite of king John 2d, and that of Cardinal Mendoza, archbishop of Toledo, son to that illustrious poet, the Marquis of Santillana. With respect to the variety of ornaments in this antient cathedral, the critic has a noble field of matter; as for the unwieldy groupe of figures in this church, so much admired by the inhabitants, and called, I know not for what rea-

son, *El Transparente*; one of their own writers, Don Antonio Ponz, a modern critic, fairly acknowledges, "That for any use or ornament, it affords, this immense mass of marble might as well have remained buried for ever in the quarry of Carrara!" I shall say nothing of the badness and crooked form of the streets, still more inconvenient from the situation of the city on a hill, much less can be offered in favour of the environs of Toledo, which are bleak and in great want of trees, though Martial, in one of his epigrams to Licinius, represents the country in his time, on the bank of the Tagus, to have been much favoured with shade.

*Æstus serenos aureo franges Tago  
Obscurus umbris arborum.*

But

But it is now high time to proceed on my favourite subject.—When the Latin tongue, which had been universal in Spain, became totally corrupted by such different invasions, and variety of nations, and dispositions, the Castilian language is supposed to have insensibly arose about the 12th century. — The oriental poetry had flourished near five hundred years, and the Provençal and Galician dialects about one hundred, so that when the genius of Castilian poetry first began to expand and acquire a national form, it must have borrowed of course from the spirit of its predecessors, and had its origin, like all antient languages, in singing the exploits of heroes, founding forth the praise of the Deity, and tuning

their lyre to the cause of religion : such were their *Cantares*, of which the *Cancioneros* have preserved ample collections.—I have enlarged upon the style and character of these several people, in order to form from thence some fixed idea, or rule proper to be assigned, as an origin to the poetry of Castile, tracing the sources of its singular variety, and discovering that want of unity in its character, in proportion as it has imitated such a diversity of models. The oriental style in the first place, delights in strained allusions, and extravagant metaphors, adorned with exuberance of expression, and an admirable variety and brilliancy of sentiment : it is happy in the harmony of its numbers, and when it rises to solemn and majestic subjects,

Subjects, is said to lose itself in enthusiasm and rapture. The Provençal poetry on the other hand is restricted by the laws of the Trobadours, and being fettered in the golden chains of love, becomes languid and faint, when it attempts to describe the thunder of Jove, or the anger of military heroes, with the clangour of war.

Such was the stock from whence the Castilian bee was to draw an inexhaustible store, and to sip every flower, enriching itself with a fund that was to charm future ages, and convey to the mind the most permanent and pleasing sensations. When they followed the manner of the ori-

entals, the Trobadours, or the Italians, it proceeded from a natural impulse, which leads to imitate the objects constantly in view; when they copied the Greeks, and Romans, it owed its effect to a more refined and elevated genius.---The various objects of the bards successively altered with the times; the achievements of Charlemagne and the twelve peers of France, drew the attention of the French and Italians; then came the croisades and the feats of knights, inspired with a military zeal for religion; after these were at an end, the mind was still exalted and attached to the marvellous, suited to the prevailing manners, so that the fictitious heroes and knight errants easily succeeded, and the tale was embellished  
with

with the amorous novel, in which the Spanish warriors were introduced with such a delusive medley of falsehood and truth, that some have taken fable for history, and others have rejected fact for romance. At last a surprising genius arose, the universal admiration of mankind, who with the invincible lance of Don Quixote, drove for ever all those extravagant heroes out of the field.

As music is composed of certain tones and cadences, it was necessary that what was to be sung should have a proper metre adapted to musical harmony, from whence the first origin of verse, in every part of the world; that the Spanish language is admirably adapted to poetic harmony,



ny, has been generally allowed, and has been evidently proved by an excellent judge, Francisco Salinas, of Burgos, born in 1513, celebrated by his contemporaries for his great skill in music, as a performer and a theorist; and though afflicted with blindness from his infancy, instead of depressing his mind, it tended to improve his musical genius in a wonderful manner. He went to Rome in the retinue of Don Pedro Sarmiento, archbishop of Compostella, and after twenty years spent in Italy, returned to Salamanca, where he held a professorship of music, and died at the age of seventy-seven, universally admired and regretted.

In tracing then the poetry of Castile through its various modulations  
from

from its origin down to the present time, we may divide it into four periods ; the first from its early dawn till the reign of king John the 2d; the next from this king to the days of Charles the 5th; the third from that emperor down to Philip the 4th; and the last from that reign down to Charles the 2d, the last Austrian monarch, when the genius of Homer and Virgil seems to have fled from the banks of the Manzanares, and to have fixed its residence on those of the Thames. In this manner its first state may be compared to its infancy, the second to its juvenile days, the third to its vigour and manhood, and the fourth to its old age and decline.

The

The Castilian bard made his first effort in an age when there was little refinement in language, and the ear unaccustomed to melodious sounds, or skilful enough to be affected by the harmonious numbers of the antients, much less in a situation to imitate them. The most antient poet known in Castile is not of a higher date than the beginning of the thirteenth century. This is Gonfalo Berceo, native of the town of Berceo, in Guypuscoa and a monk of the convent of St. Milan, from whose archives it appears that he lived in 1220, he wrote the lives of St. Milan, St. Dominic of Silos, and other Spanish saints in verse, of twelve, thirteen and fourteen syllables, as well as a poem on the battle of Simancas, where

where the Moors were defeated by Ramiro the 2d, king of Leon. These with some others are in manuscript, in the convent of St. Milan. There is likewise a poem of his on the mass in the royal library at Madrid, but nothing more has been printed than his life of St. Dominic, wherein he acquaints his readers that he attempted his poem in Spanish, being totally unable to perform it in Latin.

Quiero fer una prosa en roman paladino  
 En qual fuele el pueblo hablar a vecino  
 Ca non se tan letrado por fer otro latino.

The similitude and analogy observed between the latin and Spanish verse, such as the verse of eight feet with the Trocaic, that of five with the Adonic, that of eleven with the

the Sapphic Asclepediad, or Choriambic, and other similar compositions, shew their origin from the greek and latin models; but with respect to imitation, we must rather look for it amongst the Trobadours and Italians, from whom they borrowed the *Soneto*, *Madrigal*, *Cancion*, *Terceto*, *Oitava Rima*, and similar poems, different from the ancient *Coplas* of Spain.

The *Coplas*, called *Redondillas*, or Roundelays, are of great antiquity. The Spanish poets of those days, when they wrote in latin, made use of the rhyme of the roundelays, and from them perhaps it was adopted in the national poetry. An epitaph in  
the

SPANISH POETRY. 111

the church of Toledo, of the year 1333, has the following lines.

Mitibus hic mitis, tamen hostibus esse studebat  
Hostis, fulgebat propter certamina litis.

Which divided by the *Cesura* of rhyme,  
would run thus.

Mitibus hic mitis,  
Tamen hostibus esse studebat  
Hostis, fulgebat  
Propter certamina litis.

Another epitaph in the same church :

Toleti natus, cujus generosa propago  
Moribus ornatus fuit hic probitatis imago:  
Largus, magnificus, electus mendonienfis,  
Donis inmenfis, cunctorum verus amicus.

Which divided in the same manner,  
will be,

Toleti

Toleti natus,  
 Cujus generosa propago  
 Moribus ornatus  
 Fuit hic probitatis imago  
 Largus, magnificus  
 Electus Mendionensis,  
 Donis inmensis  
 Cunctorum verus amicus.

In the early days of their poetry, we often find verse of four, five, six and eight syllables, in the works of the infant Don Manuel, who died in 1362, and also made use of the Hendecasyllable verse, as did the marquis of Santillana.

The verses of twelve syllables were styled *De arte mayor*, and were used by king Alfonso the Wise, in his poem of *Las querelas*, or "Complaints" against the rebellion of his undutiful son Sancho; but the verse of thirteen

## SPANISH POETRY. 113

teen and fourteen feet are the most ancient metre, being used by Berceo the monk, and king Alfonso above-mentioned.

As to rhyme, we know it existed before the Goths extended themselves to the south, or the Saracens penetrated into the west: it has been thought by some writers, that even in the Augustan age the poets had a partiality for rhyme at the end, like the Leonine verse, instances of which are seen in Horace (*a*), Ovid (*b*), Propertius (*c*), and Marti-

(*a*) Non satis est pulchra esse poemata dulcia sunt  
Et quocumque volent, animum auditoris agunt.

ART. POET.

(*b*) Quot cœlum stellas, tot habet tua Roma puellas.

DE ART. AMAND. LIB. I.

(*c*) Net tibi tirrhena solvatur funis arena.

ART.

LIB. I. ELEG. 17.

I

al (*a*),



al (a), and the similitude was considered as a figure of rhetoric. However that might have been the monkish writers, without any feeling for the true graces of poetry; were delighted with jingling sounds, thinking with consonance and rhyme to supply the place of genius and fancy. To perceive the similitude between their barbarous latin verse and the Spanish rhyme of those days, we have only to compare them together.---An epitaph in the cathedral of Toledo, of 1326, is as follows :

Hoc positus tumulo fuit expertus improbitatis,  
Intus & extra fuit immensæ probitatis,  
Largus, magnificus fuit, & dans omnia gratis,  
Et speculum generis, totius fons bonitatis.

(d) Diligo præstantem, non odi cinna negantem.

LIB. 7. EPIG. 42.

This

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This strophe preserves the same rhyme, as those of the monk Berceo, with respect to the consonance of the four verses.---Let us now compare it with a Spanish epitaph of the year 1388.

D, Sancho obispo de avila como senor honrado,  
Dio muy buen exemplo, como fue buen prelado,  
Fizo este monasterio de S. Benito llamado  
Y diole muy grandes algos, por do es sustentado.

Verses ending with an echo were used by Juan de la Encina, and are with his other poems in the *Cancionero general* printed at Seville, in 1535. The last part of the penultimate word is echoed by a similar one, thus,

El mas querido, y inflamado, amado,  
Puesto en el duro, y sin consuelo, suelo,  
Sufre por mi, de tierra y cielo, yelo,  
En un pesebre desechado, echado.

Many new kind of verse, such as sapphic, adonic, phaleucian and others, were introduced by Bermudez, in his tragedies of *Nize*. The verse called *Esdrujulo* was first used by Cayrasco de Figueroa, and always ends with dactyls, or words that have the accent on the antipenultimate syllable, with the two last syllables short, thus,

Al prado de san Geronimo  
 Con mis zelos, y mi cantaro.  
 Salgo a vengarme de un picaro  
 Que noxe el estilo xacaro.

Vicente Espinel is commonly said to be the inventor of the verses called after him *Espinelas*, but this is controverted by Don Gregorio Mayans, who attributes them to Juan Angel, who used them in his poem of *Tragilriumso*  
 in

## SPANISH POETRY. 117

in 1523, and only allows to Espinel the merit of having improved the metre. Espinel also wrote a romance under the feigned name of *El Escudero Marcos de Obregon*, describing the follies of his youth, from whence the French writer La Sage has interwoven several of his characters in his romance of Gil Blas.

Other verses were called *Felaguanas*, according to Lopez de Vega, from the inventress of that name, who spent some time in men's apparel in the university of Salamanca.---It would be an useless task to relate the variety of inventions which sprang up in a barbarous age, such as the retrograde verse, the labyrinth, the cento, the acrostic, and other puerile fancies, of which Cara-

muel, a Spanish monk in the last century, has compiled two folio volumes under the title of *Rythmica* and *Metramica*, which were reprinted in Italy: but I will not take up more of your time with such trifles, and hasten to speak of blank verse, which is of great antiquity in Spain, where they seem as sensible of its dignity and majesty as we are in England. They had at the same time that the famous Trissino first introduced it in Italy, for his contemporary Alonso de Fuentes, of Seville, published a poem there in 1547, in blank verse, intituled *La Suma de Philosophia*. Trissino died in 1550.

I this moment receive the agreeable news of your safe return to England.

land. The melancholy account you give me of parties, and faction at home, grieves me exceedingly; but I trust in the spirit of our people and our numerous resources to overcome both foreign and domestic enemies. Foreign nations, unacquainted with our constitution and government, and who only hear the misrepresentations and clamour of faction, imagine we are undone; the French flatter themselves to have in a manner secured to themselves, the possession of America, under the veil of an alliance with the congress; and the Spaniards fondly conceive that Gibraltar will fall an easy prey into their hands; how egregiously they are deceived in this, as well as in their romantic ideas of conquering

ing Jamaica, I trust to providence and our own vigorous exertions to shew! you tell me we have a fine fleet in the Bay, under the command of an experienced officer, who, if he falls in with the enemy, no doubt will give a good account of them, and, I hope, return home, crowned with laurels, to receive the thanks of his countrymen. Methinks I see the gallant veteran entering London in triumph, like a Roman consul, with the spoils of the enemy, amidst the shouts and acclamations of a grateful people, repeating incessantly his victories! I must say no more, poets you know, are apt to have visions, let me wish this may be a true one, and that in all parts of the world our  
fleets





## LETTER IX.

*King Alfonso the Wise improves the Spanish Language.---Singular poem of the archpriest of Hita.*

TOLEDO, 12th JULY, 1778.

**I** AM desirous, whilst in this city, of saying something more to you of the royal poet Alfonso, the 10th king of Castile, who held his court here, and was surnamed the Wise, on account of his great learning and knowledge of astronomy. It was here that he caused those famous astronomical tables to be drawn up, called *Alfonfine*, after his name, which are  
carefully

carefully preserved in the cathedral of Seville.---He perfected the Spanish code, named *Las Siete Partidas*, from their being divided into seven parts, corresponding with the seven letters of his name. He moreover introduced the national language into all public writings; an example which was soon after followed with us, by our Edward the 3d, who gave orders for the abolishing of the Norman tongue in all public acts and judicial proceedings.

King Alfonso caused a great many books to be translated into the Castilian language, and besides giving the example by several compositions of his own in prose and verse, he spent large sums of money for the advancement

advancement of science, and extended his bounty and generosity on all occasions with the utmost magnificence. Amongst other extraordinary performances of this great king, there is a poem written in 1272, called *Theforo*, which is in the royal library of Madrid, being a treatise on the philosopher's stone, written in cyphers, and in magical characters. This book is thought to have belonged to the library of the marquis of Villena, and to have been one of those saved by the bishop of Segovia. Gil Gonzales de Avila, in his history of the church of Seville, has given the introduction to this work in Spanish verse, in which the royal poet says he had invited a famous chemist from Alexandria, in Egypt, to teach him

him the art of making gold, which they had frequently practised together, and had acquired a perfect knowledge of the philosopher's stone. The verse runs thus.

La piedra que llaman philosophal  
Sabia facer, e me la enseno.  
Fizimos la juntos; despues solo yo;  
Conque muchas veres crecio mi caudal,  
E viendo que puede facerse esta tal,  
De muchas maneras, mas siempre una cosa  
Yo vos propongo la menos penosa,  
Por mas excelente, e mas principal (a).

Amongst other numerous works of this sovereign, there is a folio manu-

(a) That is--he knew how to make the philosopher's stone, and taught it me. We made it together, and I afterwards made it by myself, so that I often increased my stock; and finding that it is to be made in different ways, but always one and the same thing, I propose to you the least expensive, as the compleatest and best method.

script,

script, in the library of Toledo, written on paper in Spanish, on miscellaneous subjects. Amongst the rest, a tract relating to St. Patrick's Purgatory, in Ireland, which perhaps may be the origin of the famous vision of Odænius, mentioned by some Irish writers. Alfonso is thought to have first introduced paper in Spain, at least amongst the Christians, supposing its use to have been known amongst the Mahometans; for Sarmiento mentions having seen a paper manuscript in 1261. I shall not, however, enter into further details relating to the works of this monarch, he was a competitor for the empire, with Richard Duke of Cornwall, who was chosen emperor, but not having fortune or power

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power sufficient to support its dignity, was obliged to return to England, and they elected another prince. As for king Alfonso, his expences reduced him to great straits; nor could his supposed knowledge of the philosopher's stone, furnish gold enough without laying heavy taxes on his subjects: while this monarch was bent upon astronomical pursuits, instead of the interest of his people, and in lieu of observing the motions of his subjects, was watching those of the stars in the crown of Ariadne; his second son Sancho rebelled against him, snatched his own crown from his head, and got possession of the kingdom. For this undutiful act, and his successive victories over the Moors,

the

the Spanish historians have called him  
*Don Sancho El Bravo* (a).

(a) Alfonso the Wise had two sons. Ferdinand the eldest and Sancho. The former died in the life time of his father, and the latter usurped the crown, on which his nephew Alfonso, Ferdinand's son, then a minor, fled to France, and was proclaimed king on the death of Alfonso the Wise, but Sancho's party prevailed. This Alfonso surnamed *La Cerda*, from a long hair on his back, married Maude of France, and left a son, Lewis, who returned to Spain, and ceding his right to the crown, accepted lands from king Ferdinand the 4th, and married Leonora Guzman, daughter of Alonso Perez de Guzman, founder of the ducal-house of Medina Sidonia, by whom he left an only daughter, *Isabella La Cerda*, first married to Don Rodrigo Alvarez de Asturias, by whom she had no issue, and afterwards to Bernard de Bearne, bastard son of the famous Gaston Phœbus Count de Foix Lord of Bearne; on this marriage de Bearne was created Count of Medina Celi, and a large estate settled on Isabella his wife, in 1367, by Henry the 3d, surnamed the Bastard, on condition of her renouncing again for herself and her heirs, all preten-

A singular

A singular poet and satyrist now occurs, who has escaped the researches of Don Nicolas Antonio, and most other biographers, till discovered by Don Lewis Velazquez, knight of the order of St. James. This is Juan Ruiz, arch-priest of Hita, whose works are in manuscript, in the library of Toledo, and who flourished in the year 1330. The manuscript is in a very imperfect condition, with many sheets tore out, and others unintelligible, therefore I shall confine myself to a specimen of a satirical piece, as given by Velazquez.

sions to the crown of Castile, as grand daughter of Alfonso, proclaimed king at the death of Alfonso the Wise. Afterwards Don Lewis de Bearne the 5th, Count of Medina Celi, descended from Isabella, was created Duke of Medina Celi in 1491, by Ferdinand and Isabel.

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This



This poem describes a contest between the time of *Eating Meat* and *Lent Time*, wherein the former is defeated on *Ash Wednesday*, and remains in a dejected state till Holy-week, when recovering his spirits, he enters the lists and sends a challenge to *Lent*, by his second *Don Breakfast*, fixing the time for combat on Easter-Sunday. *Lent*, not thinking himself obliged to receive a challenge from one whom he has vanquished, finding himself moreover enfeebled, and not being able to procure a fresh supply of sea fish, to recruit his constitution, promises to meet him at Jerusalem, dresses himself like a pilgrim and makes his escape on Holy-Saturday. Two potent emperors arrive in the world; *Don Flesh* and *Don Love*. They both  
make

make a triumphal entry: the various musical instruments are described, as well as the reception they meet with, from all ranks of people; a contest arises concerning who is to receive *Don Love*: each party offers his reasons and claim for a preference, but he refuses them, and shews a predilection to the author, as an old servant of the family, and goes to his house; but the apartments being too small for such splendid guests, a tent is fixed, and here a poetical description is given of the four seasons of the year, in the nature of a vision. The author, with the confidence of an old servant, enquires of *Don Love*, where he had been during his absence? he answers, in the mild climate of Andalusia during winter, and

complains, that coming to Toledo in the beginning of lent, they had shut the gates of the city against him; on which he applied to several convents, but none would receive him, and at last was obliged to pass the lent in the town of Castro, where he was kindly entertained. Finally recovering his strength after lent, he went to the fair of Alcala, and from thence wandering about the country, had left the author in a melancholy mood, who not pleased with a solitary life, consulted an old trot, called *Trota Conventos*. This sorry old woman advises him to make love to a nun, and paints the delight of such amours. *Trota Conventos* applies to a nun, to whom she had rendered former services, speaks in favour of the archpriest,

archpriest, and acts as procurefs between them. A long dialogue enfues, with the perfuafions of the old Jezabel on one fide, and the refiftance and inconveniences alledged by the nun on the other. *Trota Conventos* displays the character of the archpriest ;—the nun at laft confents to receive him on honourable terms, and dies in two months. The archpriest is much grieved, and engages the old hag to procure him a wife, ſhe finds out a moor, who refuſes the offer—the author relates the ſongs he had compoſed for jews and moors, adapted to various inſtruments, and proper for dances, and to be ſung by blind men and ſtrollers.—*Trota Conventos* dies, the ravages of death are deſcribed, as well as the ingratitude

of relations and heirs. The epitaph of *Trola Conventos* is given. Preventatives are offered against the sudden acts of death, which are to be guarded against with the shield of good works,

Such is the main scope of this whimsical poem, many parts of which are unintelligible at present. One of the last verses says expressly that it was finished in the year 1378.—The work is not destitute of poetical invention, and seems to be a violent satyr on the times, abounding with moral reflections, as well as lively descriptions of the vices of some of the principal personages of the court. At the same time the poet seems to laugh in his easy chair, and might have furnished

furnished a model for Rabelais, who probably never saw this poem:— from the freedom with which the archpriest has painted the vices of the times, we may call him the Petronius of Spain. Some of his verses have the same metre as the greek and latin hexameters, for instance,

Fis vos pequeno libro, de testa mas que de glosa,  
Non creo que es pequeno, ant es mui gran plosa.

The present archbishop of Toledo, Don Francisco de Laranzana has very generously opened the library of the cathedral for the use of the public, and I might mention other ancient poets, whose works are in the *Cancionero* of Juan Alfonso de Baena, collected in the reign of king John the 2d, which includes those who pre-

ceded, as well as contemporary poets ; but it would make no amends for the time lost in looking over such writings, totally divested of genius or taste, hardly one of them able even to make a good rhyme ; you will already have perceived that I partake of the gloom that hangs over this city ; or, as the French call it, *ennui*. Its very gates seem to proclaim it, for over the principal one, the gate *del Cambron*, an inscription is placed under the statue of St. Leocadia, the tutelary patroness of the city, in which she is requested to free them from such a complaint :

Tu nostra civis inclita,  
Tu es patrona vernula,  
Ab urbis hujus termino  
Procul repelle tedium.

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### LETTER X.

*Second period of Spanish Poetry in the 15th century.---Character of King John the second, and of his son King Henry the fourth of Castile.*

MADRID, 20th JULY, 1778.

**A**S the heats begin to be excessive here, I shall soon make an excursion to St. Ildefonso, a royal seat which stands in a very high situation amidst the Guadarrama mountains, that are covered with snow till the middle of June: there the court enjoy a cool and pleasant summer, and behold a second spring after their departure from Aranjuez, which they generally leave towards the end of



June. In autumn they remove again to the Escorial, spend part of the winter in the new palace at Madrid, and are occasionally at the *Casa del Campo*, a small villa near Madrid; or at the *Pardo*, about two leagues from hence; and thus with the different hunting parties of the season; these regal constellations perform their annual orbits with great punctuality and sameness.—On such occasions, every thing is extravagantly dear at these places; which becomes a heavy charge upon all the foreign ministers, whose duty obliges them to attend on the monarch; and since Lord Rochford's time I understand an extraordinary allowance is made to our ambassadors for this purpose.—Let me now make a retrograde movement,

ment, and recall your attention to the court of John the second, king of Castile, son of Henry the third and Catharine daughter of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, by Constance of Castile. Under this prince we may properly fix the second period of Spanish poetry, in the fifteenth century, and I shall just give you a slight sketch of some of the principal characters of his court. The king himself was a great favourite of the muses and an excellent judge of poetical merit; he understood and spoke latin fluently, and was not only a good poet, but moreover, encouraged all those that excelled in that art, delighting in the conversation of men of genius and talents; under such a Me-cenas, no wonder that the nobles should

should follow the royal example, and the palace of king John resemble the court of Apollo : but with all these amiable qualities, this indolent prince suffered himself to be governed by his favourites and minions, which brought on him the hatred of his subjects, who shewed their spirit of resentment to such a degree, that the king caused his Privado, Don Alvaro de Luna, to be beheaded at Valladolid.----I shall say nothing more of the marquis of Villena, as he lived in retirement under this reign, where we find Fernan Perez de Guzman, Lord of Barres, who was both an historian and a poet; the printed *Cancioneros* abound with his works, and some are in the manuscript one of Juan Alfonso de Baena; he is author of a poem intitled

titled *Las sentencias y coplas de bien vivir*, printed at Lisbon in 1564, and also published the chronicle of king John. He likewise wrote in prose the lives of all the great men who flourished in that king's reign in arms, or letters, intitled *Claros varones Espanoles*, a book greatly esteemed: In its imitation Fernando del Pulgar afterwards writ another, dedicated to Isabella queen of Castile, printed at Madrid in 1578, at the end of the epitome of the chronicle of king John the second. — Guzman had for contemporary that illustrious nobleman Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, marquis of Santillana, who lived till the time of Henry the fourth, son to John the second. By order of king John he drew up a collection of mo-

ral proverbs for the instruction of prince Henry his son, and for the same purpose also wrote a treatise on favourites, intitled *Doctrinal de privados*, in which Don Alvaro de Luna is represented as speaker, and gives advice to his successor, how he should behave like a good minister, and not follow his treacherous example.---He likewise made a collection of antient proverbs in the Spanish language, which were reprinted with other curious pieces of Spanish literature in 1737, by Don Gregorio Mayans.---The marquis supported a literary correspondence with the lord high constable of Portugal, Don Pedro, son of the Infant Don Pedro, duke of Coimbra; at the request of this prince, he wrote him a long letter, sending

sending him a collection of his poems, and giving him a circumstantial account of the state of poetry in Spain. Father Labbe says, that amongst the king of France's manuscripts, they possess several of the marquis's poems and letters. All the great men of his time were desirous of a literary correspondence with him. Don Gomez Manrique, a great poet, and brother to Don Roderic, first Count of Paredes, and uncle to Don George Manrique, another celebrated poet, wrote a poem to the marquis, requesting his works, and composed several others in his praise. This great man died in 1458, to the great regret of all his acquaintance. The famous poet Juan de Mena particularly laments this event in a poem  
he

em he wrote on the occasion, intituled *Coronacion*, wherein he supposed himself to have been carried up to Parnassus; and seen the muses and virtues crown the marquis with laurels, and with much elegance sings his praises as a philosopher, a poet, a soldier, and a christian.

The first Duke of Infantado was son to this illustrious Marquis, and directed in his will, that all the poems of his father, as well as his library, should be intailed in the family along with the estate, and be preserved in his palace of Guadalaxara, where it is said there is a very curious collection of manuscripts. This ducal family has built at Guadalaxara a sumptuous chapel to deposit the remains

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mains of their ancestors, in imitation of that famous one at the Escorial; and is also called a pantheon; it contains twenty-six urns arranged in proper order, with a great profusion of curious marble, and cost 1,082,770 reals vellon, or £12181.

After having said so much of the marquis of Santillana, I come to the great Juan de Mena, of Cordova, his friend, whose poetical talents were so admired by king John, that he retained him constantly at his court, and would frequently correct his verses with his own hand. The most celebrated piece of this poet is his *Labyrintho*, in three hundred octavas, from whence it is called *Las trescientas de Juan de Mena*, divided into seven

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parts



parts according to the planets, beginning with the moon, and finishing with saturn, which has been learnedly commented upon by Fernan Nunez de Guzman, styled *El Pinciano*, to distinguish him from the historiographer I before mentioned. Mena's poems have gone through a variety of editions, the oldest was printed at Sarragossa in 1515. That of Seville in 1528 contains more poems, and they were reprinted at Antwerp in 1552.

I must mention a very polite and accomplished gentleman, who just reached the days of King John ; his prose compositions are estimable for their antiquity, as well as purity and elegance of language. This was Pedro

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dro Lopez de Ayala. He translated Livy into Spanish, much about the time that it first appeared in French by Peter Berchorius, a Benedictine monk. He also translated, from the Italian, the fall of princes of Boccacio, and the Trojan history of Guido Colonna; Boetius *de Consolatione Philosophiæ*, and Isidore *de Summo Bono*. He lived under four kings, Peter, Henry 2d, John 1st, and Henry 3d, of all which he compiled the chronicles; the three first were printed, but that of Henry the 3d is still in manuscript, in the convent of St. Martin, in Madrid. In this work there is an original letter, from Bajazet to Henry 3d, which occasioned the famous embassy to Tamerlane, by Henry, who sent Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, as his

ambassador to that sovereign, an account of which was published by Argote de Molina.---Ayala is taxed with great partiality and flattery in favour of the rebel Henry against his brother king Peter, whom he stabbed with his own hand, and then usurped his dominions. The true chronicle of Peter was written by John de Castro bishop of Jaen, but was suppressed by the partizans of Henry, after he came to the throne.-----Before I take my leave of king John, let me mention another writer that will afford you much entertainment, that is the bachelor Fernan Gomez de Ciudad Real, who was forty-four years physician to king John 2d, and of course well acquainted with all the intrigues of his court; his letters  
were

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were published at Burgos in 1499, and throw great light on many actions of the principal characters of his time. This book was lately reprinted at Madrid (a). There is a letter amongst them from the poet Juan de Mena, complaining of the behaviour of the bishop of Cuenca, in burning and secreting the books of the marquiss of Villena (b).

(a) Centón epistolario de Gomez de Ciudad Real, generaciones y Semblanzas de Perez de Gusman : claros varones de Castilla y letras de F. del Pulgar. Madrid 1775.

(b) In a former letter I said it was the bishop of Segovia, who burned the books of the marquiss of Villena, misled by a modern Spanish writer, when I should have said, that it was Don Lope Barrientos bishop of Cuenca. Juan de Mena tells us he burned a hundred books by order of the king, and secreted many others.—He desires Gomez to send him a letter to be shewn to the king, in order to get the books

The depravity of the age gave rise to another satyrist, whose verse is mentioned in Don Quixote, under the feigned name of *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*, a satyrical poem, written in a pastoral dialogue, consisting of thirty-five stanzas between the shepherd *Mingo*, or *Dominic*, and *Gil Arebato*, describing the vices of king Henry the fourth; son to John the second, reproaching him as a bad shepherd, who took no care of his flock. The fluttering shepherd, *Tartamudo*, is Moses, *Christoval Mexia* is the Messiah, and the *Meco Moro* is Mahomet. All

again out of the bishop's hands, who he adds had seen no more of the books than the king of Morocco. Mena is very solicitous for the character of the marquiss, that the remains of his library should not fall to so unworthy an heir, who had so little respect for his fame.

their

their flocks are represented as grazing promiscuously, without any regulation or government, to the ruin and downfall of the kingdom, in which Christians, Jews, and Mahometans, lived intermixed, without controul or subordination ; for thus we must understand the tenth couplet.

Moderrado con el fueño  
 No lo cura de almagrar,  
 Porque no entiende de dar  
 Cuenta de ello a ningun dueño.  
 Quanto yo no amoldaria  
 Lo de Christoval Mexia,  
 Ni del otro tartamudo,  
 Ni del Meco Moro agudo:  
 Todo va por una via!

Some have attributed this poem to Juan de Mena, others to Fernan del Pulgar, of which opinion is the histo-

rian Mariana; and when we consider the comment of Pulgar, always printed along with the poem, explaining the most obscure passages, it seems to be a probable conjecture. As to the vices of Henry the fourth, they exceed the pen of the most poignant satyrift. He stands charged with having consented to the infidelity of his queen, with Betran de la Cueva, who for recompence was created count of Ledefma. The princess Jane was supposed to be the issue of this amour; her legitimacy was publicly contested, which occasioned much bloodshed, and ended in her being obliged to retire to a convent, stigmatized with the name of *La Bertrandina*; and Henry's sister Isabella became heiress of the crown of Castile,

tile, which by her marriage with Ferdinand of Aragon, became united for ever to that kingdom.

We now draw near to a more polished age, and to new events under the auspicious reign of Ferdinand and Isabel; another great genius appears on the horizon, the poet Juan de la Encina, who went to Jerusalem with the marquis of Tarifa, and has described that expedition in verse; while we class him in point of time as the last poet of the age, we must exalt him to the first rank for the harmony and power of his numbers. He translated the eclogues of Virgil, applying the circumstances to the events of Ferdinand and Isabel, in whose praise he wrote his poem of

*Triumfo*



*Triunfo de la fama*, and his *Arte de poesia Castellana* in prose, dedicated to the prince Don John, all which he completed, between the age of fourteen and twenty-five, as appears from the collection of his works printed at Saragossa, in 1516.

The Castilian muse now began to assume a loftier flight. Juan de Mena introduced an elegance of expression, George Manrique and his nephew (a) polished her style, and em-

(a) George Manrique the nephew, was son of Roderic Count of Paredes, and wrote an elegy on the death of his father, printed at Madrid, with a glossary, in 1632, in 8vo, along with the *Coplas* of *Mingo Revulgo*, the moral proverbs of the marquis of Santillana, and other fugitive pieces.—The moral pieces of George Manrique, the uncle, were printed at Antwerp in 1594, with a comment by Francisco Guzman.

bellished

bellished it with more easy rhyme. The marquis of Santillana disembarassed her from the fetters of couplets, and made her acquainted with the versification of the Provenzals and Italians. Finally, Juan de la Encina shewed her to be equal to the powers of the drama, following the example of the marquis of Villena in translating the latin poets, and in laying down precepts for the art, which was as much as could be expected at that time.---Besides the *Cancionera* of Baena, a further *Cancionero general* was compiled by Hernan del Castillo, including all the poets from Juan de Mena down to the editor, and has gone through several editions, the third was at Seville in 1535, and another at Antwerp, in 1573.

## L E T T E R      X I.

*The third period, or golden age of Spanish poetry,  
in the 16th century.*

MADRID, 23d JULY, 1778:

I Went last night to take leave of some acquaintance previous to my departure for St. Ildefonso, and spent the evening in a most agreeable party, at one of those private assemblies, that go by the name of *Tertulias*, but from whence they have derived this appellation I can not inform you. In many families these little parties are held every evening, and consist of a number of select friends, who enliven this friendly society.

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As soon as the company begins to assemble, they divide into different apartments; refreshments are immediately distributed, consisting of sherbets, sweetmeats, and chocolate: a cheerful and lively conversation is supported on a variety of pleasing subjects, in which the prelate, the foldier, and the civilian, come in for a share, and the ladies contribute their part. In another apartment a more grave set are amused with cards, while a few gallant knights, with the crimson insignia of chivalry on their breasts, divide themselves amongst the fair listeners, and the amorous glance is enlivened by sparkling eyes and every expression of feature:—while one echoes the soft murmurs of love, a delicate finger

sounds

sounds the guitarre, and adds to its harmony with a song.—Each party is happy, no tiresome ceremony interrupts their felicity, the very idea of jealousy is struck out of the rubric: wit and good humour are the principal pursuits, added to a cheerful mind, unbent with every social attribute:—no plodding about politics or the debts of the nation.---Happy moments thus glide away imperceptibly, till the usual hour comes, and then every one retires in silence, pleased and contented !----Amongst a variety of entertaining subjects that are occasionally discussed in this entertaining junto, they happened last night to speak of the golden age of poetry in Spain, which was agreed upon, to have taken place in the sixteenth century,

tury, with the re-establishment of letters in that kingdom, when a new field was opened to the muses, who, banished from the East, listened to the few Spaniards who courted them, and accepted of their addresses; at the time that a true taste was reviving in Italy, under the influence of Sannazar, Bembo, and Ariosto, and the muses recovering from that drooping state they had fallen into at the death of Petrarch. The first promoters of this brilliant revolution in Spain, were Juan Boscan, Garcilaso de la Vega, the great Don Diego de Mendoza, Gutierre de Cetinia, and Don Lewis de Haro, who were followed by Francisco Saa de Miranda Pedro de Padilla, Gregorio Hernandez de Velasco and others; who, besides the Italian rhyme,

rhyme, adorned their own language with the further embellishments required by the muses, such as lively invention, graceful style, purity of diction, and dignity of sentiment, equal to elevated subjects : to shew, however, the foibles of the human mind, with the baneful effect of envy, when genius makes a new effort ; a set of men was not wanting, who looked with a jealous eye on the versification of the Italians ; and such is the effect of prejudice, that it even worked upon the most ingenuous minds. Boscan acknowledges, that he attempted to introduce the new metre, at the persuasion of Navagero, the Venetian ambassador at the court of Charles the 5th, and he happily succeeded, having composed various sonnets and pastorals,

pastorals, in the Italian metre, which met with great acceptance, notwithstanding the other party endeavoured to lessen their merit, by calling such poets by the name of *Petrarquists*. Boscan translated the fable of Leander and Hero from the Greek of Musæus and a tragedy of Euripides; which served to polish the style of his contemporary and friend Garcilaso de la Vega. Boscan further improved his mind by travel in Germany and Italy, in the service of the emperor Charles, reaping the same advantages as Chaucer had done before him with us, and may be truly said to be the Petrarch of Spain.

The great Don Diego de Mendoza merits a more particular investiga-

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tion



tion from his exalted character as a poet, a soldier, and a statesman. This illustrious personage was of the noble house of Mendoza, being son of Don Ignacio Lopez de Mendoza, second count of Tendilla, and marquis of Mondejar. Our poet was born in Granada, about the year 1500, and educated in the university of Salamanca, where he applied himself closely to the latin, greek, hebrew, and arabic languages. Besides the advantages of his high birth, he enjoyed those of court favour, and was honoured with the most eminent dignities; for he was a *Commandeur* of the order of Alcantara, counsellor of state to the emperor Charles, and his ambassador at Venice and at Rome, as well as at the famous Council of Trent,

Trent, where he made a conspicuous figure. His long residence in Italy, added to his natural genius, gave him every opportunity of improvement, insomuch that he was reckoned one of the politeſt ſcholars, and moſt accomplished gentlemen of his time. He is ſaid to have had a moſt forbidding aſpect, added to a peculiar ſeverity of temper, which was of great prejudice to him when he was governor of Sienna; he ſeems to have conveyed it to his verſe, which is in general harſh, for he faintly imitated the manner of Boſcan, and ſtill retained the languid expreſſion of old times, which he was not able to conquer, notwithstanding his frequent communication with the moſt celebrated poets of Italy. Whiſt a ſtu-

dent at the university of Salamanca, he writ that little piece called *the life of Lazarillo de Tormes*, which was soon after translated into Italian, and also into English: the great author little thought at that time, that his performance would ever serve to grace the stalls of Moorfields.—But this *en passant*, for he makes a considerable figure as an historian in his *Civil wars of Granada*, wherein he also speaks as a contemporary, as his nephew the marquis of Mondejar, was the general, under whose command all those great actions were performed. — It is difficult to bestow praises equal to the elegance of this classical performance, in which the beauty of style is so great, and the sentiment every where so nobly supported,

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ported, that he rivals Sallust and Tacitus; while as a soldier he has the correctness and temper of Cæsar, and may be said to unite in the highest degree the character of a fine gentleman, and an experienced commander.---Many pieces of his, written with much freedom, still remain in manuscript in private hands, and in the grand duke's library at Florence. His other poems were printed, with the following title, *Obras del insigne Cavallero Don Diego de Mendoza en Madrid*, 1610.---His fine library he bequeathed to Philip the 2d, and it serves as one of the principal ornaments of the escurial (a).

(a) The compiler of the new Spanish Parnassus, speaking of Don Diego Mendoza, and of his having been ambassador in England, acknowledges he can-

Another valiant soldier now occurs, who distinguished himself as a poet, and joined with Don Diego de Mendoza in introducing the metre of Petrarch, and polishing the language of his own country. This was Garci-

not discover at what time; which makes me think he mistook him for his brother, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who was ambassador in England in queen Elizabeth's time, and on her being informed that he had been concerned in all the cabals that Throckmorton and others had contrived against her person and state, she caused him to be sharply reprimanded by the council, who commanded him to depart the realm, which he not doing, they sent him on board captain Hawkins's vessel, who landed him at Calais, and Sir William Wade was sent to complain of Mendoza, and justify the necessity of the step; but Philip was so offended, he would not see him, and referred him to his council, on which Sir William quitted Spain, saying his orders were to address himself to the king, and since he would not admit him, he had then nothing more to do in the kingdom.---*Winquefort.*

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laso de la Vega, born at Toledo in 1503, knight of the order of Alcántara, and son of Garcilaso de la Vega, ambassador from the catholic king at the court of Rome, son of Hernan Perez de Guzman, a celebrated poet. Garcilaso distinguished himself early as a military man in the armies of Charles the fifth, particularly at the siege of Tunis, where he was wounded in the face and in the arm. He attended the emperor in Piedmont, having eleven companies of infantry under his command, and was mortally wounded at the storming of a tower near Frejus, being only thirty-three years old, at which the emperor was so irritated, that all the peasants who defended it, were put to the sword. Thus fell, in the

prime of life, a gallant soldier and an accomplished genius, who had greatly improved the poetry of Spain by polishing its numbers, and introducing the melody and harmony of the Italian versification, with which he had been early acquainted, as well as with the principal Italian poets of his time, so that he has justly been stiled *The Prince of Spanish poets*, having with his friend Boscan brought the Spanish poetry to its highest perfection.—Still the national pride of Don Christoval de Castillejo, endeavoured to oppose the progress of harmony and poetical numbers, and though he was at Vienna as secretary to prince Ferdinand, afterwards emperor; he still inveighed against his countrymen, particularly in a satyrical piece  
“ against

"against those who quitted the Spanish metre to adopt the Italian:" and in a poem intitled *Petrarquistas*, he introduces Juan de Mena, George Manrique, Garci Sanchez, Cartagena, and Torres Naharro, as followers of the Spanish metre, in opposition to Boscan, Garcilaso, Don Luis de Haro, and Don Diego Mendoza, accusing this last of having made use of verse with *leaden feet*.

You will find nevertheless in the poets of this age, a softness and fluency unknown to their predecessors; Hernandez distinguished himself by his translation of the *Æneis* of Virgil, and his first and fourth eclogue, as also the poem of Sannazzar *de partu virginis*. Juan de Guzman  
likewise



likewise translated the Georgics of Virgil with the greatest success, which were printed at Salamanca in 1586.

Lope de Rueda, a celebrated actor, now began to give some form to the Spanish stage, being also a principal performer of his own compositions, which were published after his death, by Juan Timoneda; he was followed by Bartholome de Torre Naharro, another writer for the stage, whose comedies and other poems were published by himself, under the whimsical name of *Propaladia*: Juan de la Cueva was the next in succession to Naharro, who adorned the dramatic muse, as Don Alonso de Er- cilla did the epic.

Fernando

Fernando de Herrera, by a singular caprice, acquired the surname of *Divine* from the fire and energy of his verse, though he was surpassed in facility of rhyme by Don Estevan Manuel de Villegas, who admirably enriched his own language with all the graces of the Latin sapphics, Hexameters and Pentameters, uniting the wit of Horace, the graces of Anacreon, the freedom and elegance of Tibullus, with the politeness of Propertius, and the natural turn of Theocritus. His poems were published under the title of *Eroticas*. He also translated Boetius, in a manner equal to his great reputation.

The persecuted Father Lewis de Leon may justly be stiled one of the  
principal

principal favourites of the muses in this polite age, imitating Pindar, Horace, Virgil and Tibullus, as well as Petrarch and Bembo.---His elegant versions of the sacred writings drew on him an unjust and severe persecution from his rivals, and after long and cruel sufferings in the dark prisons of the inquisition, he came out with honour and triumph, to the confusion and disgrace of his enemies! Next to him we must place the two brothers of the name of Argensola, who equally claim the title of the Horace of Spain, and have not since been equalled.

We must also write with golden letters in the temple of fame, a celebrated statesman, Gonzalo Perez, secretary

## SPANISH POETRY. 173

cretary of state to Philip the second, and father to the unfortunate Antonio Perez, secretary to Philip, as his father had been, and whose melancholy story is well known : Having had the good fortune to escape from Philip, he finished his days in obscurity, in France, under the protection of Henry the 4th. With the permission of queen Elizabeth, he went, for a little time, to England, and was in correspondence with Essex and other persons of that time.---But to return to his father Gonzalo, he distinguished himself as a poet by an elegant translation of the Odyſſey of Homer, in blank verse, in which attempt he stood unrivalled till the British muse, jealous of a foreign bard, disputed with him the honour of excelling

celling in so noble a career.----As for Christoval de Mesa, he faintly closes the expiring æra, and though a scholar of Tasso, with whom he lived five years in Rome, he remained far behind him, and unequal to epic poetry: some of his performances are tolerable, such as the fable of Narcissus, from Ovid, his imitation of the *Beatus Ille* of Horace, a poetical compendium of the art of poetry, and some pastorals.----After this last effort, we must now view the Spanish muse like a stately tree, arrived at its ultimate period of improvement, and gently bending its head to the all powerful influence of time, gradually declining with the progeny of Philip the 2d, who, after a long reign, expired in the Escorial, overwhelmed

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SPANISH POETRY. 175

ed with disease, in the most excruciating pains, and devoured by vermin. The muses wept, foreseeing the decline of the Philips, and closed the brightness of their days with the century! One of the last writers who supported this tottering fabric, was the Count de Rebolledo, a gentleman of distinguished talents, and a soldier of great intrepidity. He served first in the marine department, under Don Pedro de Leyva, and having the command of a galley, gave proofs of the utmost bravery against the Turks: he afterwards served in Flanders with equal reputation as a colonel of horse, and was employed as a minister to the imperial court on business of great moment; and Ferdinand the 2d, being at the diet of Ratisbonne,

tilbonne, was so pleased with his conduct and prudence, though at that time only thirty-six years of age, that he conferred on him the dignity of a Count of the sacred Roman Empire.

---He was afterwards minister plenipotentiary in Denmark, after which he returned to Madrid and was of the council of war, and died in his eightieth year, universally regretted.---His works were printed at Copenhagen and Antwerp; many of his poems are dedicated to Christina Queen of Sweden; his *Selva Danica* to Sophia Amelia Queen of Denmark, and his *Selva Militar y Politica* to his own sovereign, Philip the 4th, from whom there are sixty-eight original letters extant, written to him from 1648 to 61, many of the king's

own

own hand, while in Denmark; seven from the cardinal Infant Don Ferdinand, and other illustrious personages.

Many poets however supported the spirit of the golden age, such as Vicente Espinel, Don Luis de Ulloa, Pedro de Espinosa, Don Francisco Quevedo, Don Juan de Jauregui, Solis the historian and others, who like falling leaves announced the long winter that was to follow. The name of Quevedo is well known to you, and his *visions* which have been translated into English; his genius was such that neither the persecutions he suffered from his enemies, or other mortifications, could damp his bold masculine spirit, or the keenness of his satire; besides his merit as a poet

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he



he was well versed in the oriental languages and of great erudition.--- His poems appeared under the feigned name of the Bachelor Francisco de la Torre. When the Duke of Osuna was viceroy of Naples, he was employed in several commissions of consequence amongst the Italian states, and had the address to go to Venice, on a particular object, disguised as a mendicant. The viceroy sent him to court, acknowledging his great services, for which he was made a knight of St. James.—When the duke's interest and favour declined, he came in for his share of disgrace, and was three years in confinement, afflicted with illness, but nothing appearing against him, he was set at liberty. Disgusted with the fickleness of court favour,

your and attendance on the great, he refused several employments that were offered him, as well in the ministry, as the embassy to Genoa; and retired to his own seat, where he gave himself up intirely to literary pursuits. At the age of fifty-four, he entered into the state of matrimony, with Dona Esperanza de Aragon, a lady of rank, whom he soon had the misfortune to lose, finding no other alleviation than such as arose from his philosophical disposition. But the envenomed shafts of envy still reached him in his solitude; ----- on a false accusation of being author of an infamous libel, he was arrested in the night, put in close confinement, and his estate sequestered. In this situation he laboured under various

diseases with acute pain of body and mind ; his patrimony seized, and himself supported by charity ! under this distress he wrote that elegant and pathetic letter to the prime minister *Olivarez*, which procured him his enlargement : the case was enquired into, and the calumny, as well as its author, discovered. He once more returned to court to recover his estate, which had suffered various depredations, but this ungrateful theatre he soon abandoned, and retired to his country seat, overwhelmed with illness, the consequence of his cruel imprisonment, all which he bore with manly fortitude, and finished his days with exemplary and christian resignation in the 65th year of his age, in 1645. His person was engaging, his complexion

complexion fair, and great expression in his countenance ; but from continual study, his eyes were so weakened, that he constantly wore spectacles. — Such was Quevedo, one of the greatest scholars and eminent poets of his time, whose youth was spent in the service of his country in Italy, where he distinguished himself with the utmost sagacity and prudence.---To give you an idea of his extensive knowledge and profound erudition, I own myself at a loss, much less to speak of his numerous though excellent writings.---His moral discourses prove his sound doctrine and religious sentiments, while his literary pieces display his infinite judgment and refined taste.---His great knowledge of Hebrew is apparent from the report

of the historian Mariana to the king, requesting that Quevedo might revise the new edition of the bible of Arias Montanus. His translations of Epicterus and Phocylides, with his imitations of Anacreon and other Greek authors, shew how well he was versed in that language: That he was a Latin scholar, his constant correspondence, from the age of twenty, with Lipsius, Chifflet, and Scioppius, will sufficiently illustrate.---As a poet he excelled both in the serious and burlesque style, and was singularly happy in that particular turn we have since admired in Butler and Swift. His library, which consisted of about five thousand volumes, was reduced, at his death, to about two thousand, and is preserved in the convent of St. Martin,

## SPANISH POETRY. 183

Martin, at Madrid.---Were I to enlarge further, respecting this great man, I should easily fill a moderate volume.---But it is time to proceed, before we behold the setting sun, and a mist arise over the poetical horizon, which various incidents have obscured and greatly deprived of its original lustre.

The *Diana Enamorada* of Gil Polo, an elegant poet in the sixteenth century, was reprinted in London, in 1739, under the inspection of Pedro de Pineda.---Jauregui translated Lucan, but not with that success as he did the *Aminta* of Tasso. I close the golden age with the immortal Miguel de Cervantes ;---like another Homer, many cities contended for his birth,

and his transcendant merit you are well acquainted with. In his poem intitled *A Voyage to Parnassus*, he has delineated the characters of the poets of his time --- he equally shines as a dramatic writer, but every thing of his is totally eclipsed by his incomparable romance of *Don Quixote*, which, alone crowns his temples with never fading laurels.

Thus ended the golden age of the Spanish muse, whose period of glory was short, though the attempt to secure its duration seemed to promise a more lasting reign, if a close imitation of the antients, and the precepts of those great masters, Aristotle and Horace, could have secured to them the prize; or some invisible cause

cause had not with hasty strides brought on its decline: but before I speak of this last period, I transmit you an ode of Horace in Spanish, Italian, and English, from whence you may form a comparative judgment of the energy and powers of each language. I have subjoined a few specimens of hexameters, sapphics, adonics, and epigrams, which will give you some idea of the harmony of Spanish numbers in its most improved state.

Adieu!

ODE



*Ad Fuscum Aristium.*

**I**NTEGER vitæ scelerisque purus  
Non eget mauri Jaculis, neque arcu  
Nec venenatis gravida fagittis,  
Fusce pharetra.

Sive per fyrtes iter æstuosas,  
Sive facturus per inhospitalem  
Caucasum, vel quæ loca fabulosus  
Lambit Hydaspes.

Namque me sylva lupus in Sabina,  
Dum meam canto Lalagen, et ultra  
Terminum curis vagor expeditus,  
Fugit inermem.

Quale portentum neque militaris  
Daunia in latis alit esculetis :  
Nec Jubæ tellus generat, leonum,  
Arida nutrit.

Pone me pigris ubi nulla campis  
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura ;  
Quod latus mundi nebulæ, malusque  
Jupiter urget.

Pone sub curru nimium propinqui  
Solis, in terra domibus negata :  
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,  
Dulce loquentem.

# SPANISH POETRY. 187,

IN SPANISH.

*The same by Don Antonio de Solis, author of the  
history of the conquest of Mexico,*

NO ha menester defenderse  
Con dardos arrojados  
Quien vive con entereza,  
Y camina sin delito.

Sobrale el arco y la aljaba,  
Con el embrion maligno  
De venenas factas  
Que anaden malicia al tiro.

O camine por las firtas  
Abrafadas del estio,  
O el Caucafo inhabitable  
Penetre con pie sencillo.

O bien pise los horrores  
De los formidables riscos,  
Que undoso lame el Hydaspes  
Antes de besar el Indo.

Que entre los mayores riesgos  
Camina bien defendido  
El que va con la inocencia  
Que es virtud sin enemiga.

B. *The last strophe of Horace seems to have been  
omitted by the Spanish poet.*

IN

## In ITALIAN.

*By Dr. Maffei, of Leghorn, in his translation of  
Horace, dedicated to Sir John Dick, Bart.  
his Majesty's Consul at Leghorn, and knight  
of St. Anne of Russia.*

CHI e giusto, e puro  
Di diletti ha il petto,

Fusco non cerca,

Mauri dardi, o l'arco

Ne la faretra

Piena di saette

Avvelenate:

O muova i passi

Per le firti ardenti

O sia che debba

Valicare il monte

Caucaſo, o i luogi

Dove favuloſo

Scorre l'Idalpe.

Poiche là mia

Lalage cantando

Mentre minoltro

Nel Sabino bosco,

Scevro di cure

Disarmato,

# SPANISH POETRY. 189

IN ENGLISH,

*By Wentworth Dillon Earl of Roscommon.*

**V**IRTUE, dear friend! needs no defence,  
The surest guard is innocence:

None knew 'till guilt created fear  
What darts or poisoned arrows were.

Integrity undaunted goes  
Through Lybian sands or Scythian snows,  
Or where Hydaspes' wealthy tide  
Pays tribute to the Persian pride.

For as by am'rous thoughts betray'd  
Careless in Sabin woods I stray'd,  
A grisly foaming wolf unled,  
Met me unarm'd, yet trembling fled.

No beast of more portentous size,  
In the Hercinian forest lies,  
None fiercer in Numidia bred,  
With Carthage were in triumph led.

Set me in the remotest place,  
That Neptune's frozen arms embrace,

Where

Difarmato, e solo,  
Me fuge un lupo,  
Qual la guerriera  
Daunia militare  
Mostro non nutre  
Nelle vaste selve,  
Ne la Numidia  
Forma di leoni  
Arida madre  
Nei pigri campi,  
Dove pianta estiva  
Giammai leggiero  
Zeffiro recrea  
Pommi, cui nebbia,  
Ed il procelloso  
Giove molesta :  
O sotto il carro  
Pommi del vicino  
Sole, nei luoghi  
Vedovi di tetti,  
Dolce ridente  
Lalage amero  
Dolce parlante.

## SPANISH POETRY. 191

Where angry Jove did never spare  
One breath of kind and temp'rate air.

Set me where on some pathless plain  
The swarthy Africans complain,  
To see the chariot of the sun  
So near their scorching country run.

The burning zone, the frozen isles  
Shall hear me sing of Celia's smiles:  
All cold, but in her breast I will despise;  
And dare all heat! but that in Celia's eyes.

## SPECIMEN of HEXAMETERS,

*By Don Estevan Manuel de Villegas.*

## E G L O G A.

**L**ICIDAS Coridon, y Coridon el amante de Filis,  
 Pastor el uno de cabras, el otro de blancas ovejas,  
 Ambos a dos aurnos, mozos ambos, arcades ambbs,  
 Viendo que los rayos del sol fatigaban al orbe,  
 Y que vibrando fuge feroz la canicula ladra,  
 Al puro cristal, que cria la fuente sonora,  
 Llevedos del son alegre de su blando susurro,  
 Las plantas veloces mueven, los pasos animan,  
 Y al tronco de un verde enebro se sientan amigos.

## S A P P H I C S.

*By the same hand.*

**D**ULCE vecino de la verde selva,  
 Huesped eterno del abril florido,  
 Vital aliento de la madre Venus,  
 Zephhiro blando.

Si de mis ansias el amor supiste;  
 Tu, que las quejas de mi voz llevaste,  
 Oye: no temas, y a mi ninfa dile,  
 Dile, que muero.

Filis

## SPANISH POETRY. 193

Filis un tiempo mi dolor sabia,  
Filis un tiempo mi dolor lloraba,  
Quisome un tiempo; mas agora tempo,  
Temo sus iras.

Afi los dioses con amor paterno,  
Afi los cielos con amor benigno,  
Nieguen al tiempo, que feliz volares,  
Nieve a la tierra.

Jamás el peso de la nube parda,  
Quando amanece la elevada cumbre,  
Torque tus hombros, ni su mal granizo.  
Hiera tus alas.

### A D O N I C S.

*By Geronimo Bermudez.*

**O!** Corazones  
Mas que de tigres!

**O!** manos crudas  
Mas que de fieras,  
Como pudistes  
Tan inocente,  
Tan apurada

**O**

Sangre



194      ORIGIN      OF

Sangre verter !

Ay ! que su grito,

O Lusitania,

Patria mia,

Ay que su grito

Desde la tierra

Rompe los cielos,

Rompe las nubes,

Rompe los ayres,

Trae las llamas

Del zelo vivo,

Trae los rayos

Del vivo fuego

Que purifica

Toda la tierra

Contaminada

De la crueza

Que cometiste !

Trae la vara,

Trae el azote,

Trae la peste,

Trae la furia

Que te castiga

Sin piedad.

Etc. - - - - -

ANACRE-

# SPANISH POETRY. 195

## ANACREONTIC ODE,

*By Don Estevan Manuel de Villegas.*

YO vi sobre un tomillo  
Quexarse un paxarillo  
Viendo su nido amado,  
De quien era caudillo,  
De un labrador robado.  
Vile tan congojado  
Por tal atrevimiento  
Dar mil quejas al viento;  
Para que al cielo santo  
Lleve su tierno llanto,  
Lleve su triste acento.  
Ya con triste harmonía,  
Es forzando el intento,  
Mil quexas repetía:  
Ya cansado callaba:  
Y al nuevo sentimiento  
Ya sonoro volvía.  
Ya circular volaba:  
Ya rastroero corría:  
Ya, pues, de rama en rama

Al

## 156      ORIGIN   OF

Al rustico seguia ;  
 Y saltando en la grama,  
 Patece que decia :  
 Dame, rustico fiero,  
 Mi dulce compania :  
 Y que le respondia  
 El rustico : *no quiero.*

### P I N D A R I C   O D E ,

*By Father Lewis de Leon.*

**E**L agua es bien precioso,  
 Y entre el rico tesoro,  
 Como el ardiente fuego en noche oscura.  
 Asi relumbra el oro.  
 Mas, alma si es sabroso  
 Cantar de las contiendas la ventura,  
 Asi como en la altura  
 No hay rayo mas luciente,  
 Que el sol, que rey del dia  
 Por todo el yermo cielo se demuestre ;  
 Asi es mas excelente  
 La olimpica poesia  
 De todas las que canta la voz nuestra :  
 Materia abundante,  
 Donde todo elegante.

*Ingenio*

## SPANISH POETRY. 197

Ingenio alza la voz, ora cantando  
De Rea, y de Saturno el engendrado,  
Y Juntamente entrando  
Al techo de Hieron altopreciado.

- - - - -  
- - - - -

### C A N C I O N.

*By Garcilaso de la Vega, dedicated to Violante  
Sanseverino, daughter to the Duke de Soma, in  
Naples.*

**S**I de mi baja lira  
Tanto pudiese el son, que un momento  
Aplicase la ira  
Del animoso vento,  
Y la furia del mar, y el movimiento;  
Y en alperas montañas,  
Con el suave canto entermeciese  
Las fieras animales,  
Los arboles moviese,  
Y al son confusamente los truxese:  
No pienfes que cantando  
Seria de mi, hermosa flor de gaido,  
El fiero Marte ayrado,  
A muerte convertido,  
De polvo, y sangre, y de sudor tenido:

198      O R I G I N    O F

Ni aquellos capitanes,  
En la sublime rueda colocados,  
Por quien los alemanes  
El fiero cuello atados,  
Y los franceses van domesticados.

E P I G R A M.

*By Baltazar del Alcazar,*

MAGDALENA me picó  
Con un alfiler un dedo:  
Dije la : picado quedo,  
Pero ya lo estaba yo.  
Ríose, y con su cordura  
Acudió al remedio presto:  
Chupóme el dedo, y con esto  
Sané de la picadura.

E P I G R A M.

*By Lope de Vega on Charles Prince of Wales,  
when he went to Madrid to court the In-  
fanta of Spain.*

CARLOS Stuardo foy  
Que siendo Amor, mi guia  
Al cielo de España voy  
Por ver mi estrella Maria!

L E T T E R

LETTER XII.

*Fourth period and decline of Spanish Poetry in  
the seventeenth century.*

ST. ILDEFONSO, 26th JULY, 1778]

**L**IKE another Don Quixote, I sallied forth from Madrid, on one of the hottest days in July, and having traversed a bleak country and climbed steep and almost perpendicular mountains, I at last reached, with a good deal of labour, the royal seat of St. Ildefonso, in a wild and barren situation, where, for the sake of the cool air that constantly reigns here, Philip the 5th thought fit to display his magnificence, by converting one of the most barren

spots in nature into a royal villa, where the lavish expence of Versailles was to be renewed, and the French taste of gardening exhibited, with the formal lines of stiff design and antiquated symetry. Nature, it is true, assisted them with the most clear and limpid water, which they have made use of to advantage ; shade being here an object of principal luxury, the gardens have the appearance of a perfect paradise, on leaving the sultry air of Madrid. But notwithstanding this contrast, it is here so piercing at night, and its transitions so sudden as to be often productive of dangerous effects on the constitution ; for while you pass the day agreeably, dressed in silk, a Russian fur is acceptable at night.

Though

Though every effort is made in these gardens, in the midst of snowy mountains, to support vegetation, and force a smile on nature, yet every thing looks languid; and instead of the blooming aspect of summer, it rather puts me in mind of the subject I proposed continuing in my last letter, when having traced the Spanish muse in the bright days of splendour, I come now to descant upon her withered bays, like the puny products of St. Ildefonso, that have the colour and resemblance of youth, but nothing of its juvenile vigour and strength.—Thus it happened to the Spanish muse in the seventeenth century, to which the false taste that had already crept in amongst the Italians contributed not a little,



a little, and served to hasten their decline; even the Tuscan muse, after soaring to the highest pinnacle of glory, insensibly began to lose her pristine comeliness under the tuition of Marini and his pupils, who by a strain of false similes and extravagant conceits, stripped the muses of their natural graces. The Spaniards soon caught the contagion in the feeble condition they were in, and Lorenzo Gracian, some of whose works have been translated into English, further established this false taste, which he attempted to methodize in a formal essay, entitled *de Agudeza y arte de Ingenio*; by which means the pleasing elegance of nature was disfigured by a combination of pedants, who losing sight of every beautiful idea, contemning,

temning at the same time the rules of art, made way for their insipid vagaries.---These unmerciful despoilers may be classed under three heads in Spain ; the first violated all the laws of the drama, and introduced innumerable defects on the stage, which have never been eradicated: of these, Christoval de Virues, Lope de Vega, and Montalban, were the principal leaders, and were followed by Calderon, Salazar, Candamo, Zamora, and others, who to the most glaring improprieties, superadded a ridiculous bombast and affectation of language, which became superlatively intolerable and absurd.----The second class consisted of those who in imitation of the Italians and their unnatural *Concetti*, introduced such an extravagant profusion

profusion of false sentiment, equivocal expression, and swollen periods, as recalled to mind those ancient times, when such men had been so severely handled by Horace; and not content with doing so much injury to the drama, they further extended it to lyric compositions.---The third class was distinguished by the pedantic appellation of *Cultos*, "or refined," which comprehended a set of puritans, who out of false zeal for the chastity of the muses, endeavoured to introduce a greater purity of diction, but by their awkward and ignorant presumption, substituted obscure and unknown expressions to a new and turgid dialect. At the head of these was the poet Luis de Gongora, the count de Villamediana,

diana, with others of less note, who contributed to diffuse an universal bad taste, and discredit the muses, fapping the very foundations of their temple, and pointing their shafts against the few remnants of beauty and eloquence in every branch of literature: to such a low state was true genius reduced by these vandals, that the greatest applauses were given to vile punsters and minstrels, and every retailer of false wit, under the denomination of *Discrecionales*, who in a former age would have been hissed off the stage with the most sovereign contempt.

While an universal langour thus pervaded every mind, the royal stem partook of a similar decline of nature.

ture. The progeny of the great emperor Charles now drew near to its last gasp! whatever may have been the cause, the muses gradually drooped with the empire of these monarchs, and in conjunction with the dismembered dominions of the Philips, expired under the feeble Charles the second, who leaving no issue, a prince of the house of Bourbon ascended the throne of Spain. — The national dress of the Spaniard, as well as his character, were altered; his fable garment was changed for the gay and effeminate modes of Versailles; Spanish gravity was put out of countenance, and he was deprived of his darling whiskers, as the savage Russians much about the same time lost their beards, and in a short time

time had been despoiled of their beards (a).---Perhaps you are unacquainted with the importance of whiskers at that time in Spain and Portugal : It is told of Don Joam de

(a) When the emperor Charles's german soldiers quarrelled with their Spanish comrades, they used to swear in german *By Got*, laying hold of their whiskers; from whence the Spaniards, mistaking the meaning of the word, have called whiskers ever since by the name of *Bigotes*, though the original word is *Mostacho*, from the Greek word *μυσος* the upper lip.--Whiskers and beards were points of great consequence in Spain in those days and any insult offered to them was not to be borne with, even after death by the *Cid*, as the grave Cobarruvias tells us, *It was said*, that a Jew having pulled him by the beard on his tomb, out of contempt, God permitted that the figure of this champion should extend its marble hand to its sword, and draw it one third out of the scabbard; on which the affrighted Jew screamed out, which brought people together, who related the story, and some *said* it caused the Jew to become a Christian !

Castro,

Castro, a Portuguese viceroy in India, that being in great want of money, and desirous to borrow a large sum in that country, he pawned one of his whiskers, as the most sacred pledge he could think of; which he afterwards honourably redeemed; in which he acted with more punctilio than that famous Spanish hero the *Cid*, who obtaining a sum of money of a jew on his plate, instead of sending it to his house, ordered only a chest of sand;—though he afterwards made restitution in his will.

Adieu.--My next will be from the Escorial, where I am going to spend a few days, and then prepare matters for my departure for England.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

*Remarks made in the library of the Escorial, on  
Spanish commentators, poetical translations of  
greek and latin classics, and italian authors.*

ESGURIAL, August 2d, 1778.

**I** HAVE taken this opportunity to come to the Escorial in order to view this grand edifice more at leisure, when the court is not here, and to indulge a few hours study and research in this very curious library, of which you have already heard so much, as well as of the famous building of the Escorial, the great work of the gloomy Philip the second, which cost him six millions of ducats. His long reign furnished him more-

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over



over the pleasure of seeing it perfected, with the additional satisfaction of the whole having been compleated under the direction of two Spanish architects, John Baptist de Toledo, and his pupil Juan de Herrera ; a structure of which you have of late seen so many accurate accounts, that it leaves me little to add on the subject, more than to inform you, that, as to the exaggeration of this building having eleven thousand windows, fourteen thousand doors, and eight hundred pillars, it is denied by their own writers, as well as what has been said of the tabernacle on the great altar being of porphyry, with eighteen pillars of agate, and being fourteen years making ; also that the ceiling of the choir was painted by

Titian :

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Titian : that the glass windows were fixed in frames of silver gilt, and that the library contained an hundred thousand volumes; all which are fabulous inventions, introduced by novel writers and book-makers, to amuse the credulous public in foreign countries.

The library may contain about thirty thousand volumes, and may undoubtedly be esteemed as a very curious and valuable collection : I spent a considerable time there with great delight. It would be an herculean labour to attempt giving a series of the numerous collections of Spanish poets, commentators and translators, from the Greek, Latin and Italian poets, I mean to confine my-

self only to poetical books. The most antient collection of poems is that made by Baena in the reign of John the 2d, mentioned before; which is in manuscript in this library, and continued by Hernando del Castillo.---Lorenzo de Ayala published at Valencia, in 1588, another collection, entitled *Jardin de amadores*, "The garden of lovers;" to which may be added the *Romancero general* of Miguel de Madrigal, in 1604, that of Flores in Madrid in 1614, and the first part of the *Tesoro de Divina poesia* from various writers. Pedro de Espinosa compiled the first part of the *flores de poetas ilustres de Espana*, printed at Valladolid in 1605, wherein the compiler also makes a conspicuous figure.

It

It was the misfortune of letters, at that time in Spain, to be loaded with commentators, who equally pressed good and bad authors into the service, and burthened them with the weight of their dullness; those who had not the temerity to attempt the Greek and Latin classics, because they did not understand them, fell without mercy on the works of their countrymen, and some would comment upon their own works, which gave birth to the most monstrous productions. Even the learned Marquis de Santillana commented upon his own *Proverbios*; the poets Juan de Mena and Garcilaso de la Vega had numerous commentators; and the obscure Gongora had three such writers, who were so unsuccessful that

they require another commentator for themselves.

The translations of poets in the Spanish language are numerous, taken from Greek and Latin authors, as well as from the Provençal, Italian, Portugueze, and latterly from the French. Gonzalo Perez translated the odyssey of Homer, and Christoval de Mesa the iliad, which last is still in manuscript. The medea of Euripides was translated by Pedro Simon Abril in Barcelona, in 1599. Boscan translated from the Greek poet Musæus, as Lewis de Leon did from Pindar, and Villegas from Theocritus. Of Virgil there are several translations besides that of the Marquis of Villena. Juan de la Encina translated

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## SPANISH POETRY. 215

ted the eclogues in 1516, at Saragossa, Juan de Guzman, a scholar of the famous Sanctius Brocensis, that is, Sanchez of Brozas in Estremadura, translated the Georgics in blank verse at Salamanca in 1586. Christoval de Mesa translated the æneis in octave rhymes in 1615, but that by Luis de Leon, published by Quevedo at Madrid in 1631, is far superior, and may be considered as an excellent performance.

The art of poetry of Horace has been excellently translated by Espinel as well as by Luis de Zapata, printed in Spanish verse at Lisbon in 1592.

Ovid's metamorphoses have been translated into Spanish by several

ral hands, particularly by Philip Mey at Tarragona in 1586, with great success, which shews the taste of Don Antonio Agustín archbishop of Tarragona, who kept Mey in his palace as a printer, whom he employed in his own valuable and learned works. This great prelate notwithstanding his serious occupations had a favourable opinion of the muses: He began a poem in praise of the fountain of *Alcover*, which he had observed in a visitation of his diocese, and directed Mey to finish it. — The epistles of Ovid were translated in blank verse by Don Francisco de Aldana a captain in the army under Philip II. but when the author's brother Cosmo printed his other poems at Madrid in 1591, this work was so scarce that  
he

he was obliged to omit it. Many other translations from the greek and latin classics are to be found, and I have this moment received a new book on that subject from Madrid, by Don Juan Antonio Pellicer of the king's library, who has just published an introductory essay to a future work, which is to comprehend all the learned Spaniards who have translated the fathers, philosophers, greek and latin historians and poets (a).

The italian poets were introduced at an early period into Spain. It is

(a) Enfayo de una bibliotheca de Traductores Espanoles donde se da noticia de las traducciones que hay en Castellano de la Sagrada Escritura, Santos Padres, filosofos, historiadores medicos, oradores, poetas, asi griegos como latinos; y de otros autores que han florecido antes de la invencion de la imprenta por Don Juan Antonio Pellicer y Saforcada, &c. Madrid, 1778.

somewhat



somewhat remarkable that all their great geniusses owed their improvement to the italian school. It was there that Mendoza, Boscan, Garcilaso de la Vega, Quevedo, Ercilla, and many others formed their taste, and when the Spaniards lost their dominions in Italy at the death of Charles II, it seems to have been the principal cause of the decline of literature amongst them.

The learned Marquiss of Villena had at a very early period given a translation of Dante at the desire of the Marquiss of Santillana, and the same poet was afterwards translated in verse with notes by Don Pedro Fernandes de Villegas arcdeacon of Bur-

gos, and printed in that city in 1515, at the end of which the 10th satire of Juvenal is added by the author's brother Geronimo de Villegas prior of Cuevas Rubias.— The *Triumph* of Petrarch was turned into Spanish verse and published at Medina del campo in 1554. The *Orlando furioso* of Ariosto was translated at Toledo in 1510 and again by Don Geronimo de Urrea, printed at Lyons in 1556. *The Tears of St. Peter* by Tanfillo, an Italian poet of the twelfth century, has been twice given in Spanish, first by Lewis Galvet de Montalvo, at Toledo, in 1587, and then by Don Juan de Sedenio. Tanfillo having written a licentious poem in his youth, it was suppressed at Rome, and inserted in the *Index* of prohibited books,

books, which affected him so much, that it occasioned this elegant poem of the *Tears of St. Peter*, which the famous Malherbe has also translated into French. Tansillo has been sometimes compared to Petrarch. The *Gierusalemme Liberata* of Tasso has been translated into Spanish by Juan de Sedenor at Madrid, in 1587. — There are two translations of the *Poſſor Fido* of Guarini, the first by Suarez de Figueroa, of Valencia, in 1609, the second by the fair hand of a Lady, Dona Isabela de Correa, and printed at Antwerp in 1694. But to return to Tasso, Earia a Portuguese writer proves in his life of Camoens, that the poem of the *Lusiad* is prior to Tasso, as the *Lusiad* was published in 1572, and the first edition

edition of the *Gierusalemme Liberata* appeared imperfect in 1581, and complete at Venice in 1582, which is nine years later than the *Lusiad*; from whence it is evident the Portuguese had a correct epic poem before the Italians. Faria even goes further, and endeavours to shew that Tasso has borrowed some of his most beautiful passages from the Lusitanian bard: it is moreover singular, that while Voltaire endeavours to depreciate the *Lusiad* with the seeming jealousy of a rival, he extols some passages of the *Araucana*, a Spanish poem by Don Alonso de Ercilla, wherein the French poet compares the speech of the Indian chief *Colocolo* to his people, with that of Nestor to Achilles and Agamemnon in the first

first book of the Iliad, and gives the superiority to the Spaniard over Homer. You will of course be curious to hear something further of such a distinguished writer. Don Alonso de Ercilla, a gentleman of Biscay, was a knight of the order of St. James, and gentleman of the bed-chamber to the emperor Rodolph the 2d. He was brought up at court from his youth, having been page to the emperor Charles and Philip his son, whom he attended in all his expeditions to Italy, Flanders, Germany, and England. Being in London, when he heard that a rebellion had broken out in the town of *Arauco* in South America, he immediately quitted England and embarked for America, as a volunteer in  
the

the cause of his country, where he distinguished himself with extraordinary valour against the Indians, writing by night the actions he had been witness of by day, and for want of other conveniencies, composing his poem on scraps of paper, or pieces of leather, taking up alternately the sword or the pen ;---after many acts of heroism, he had the good fortune to return to the court of his master, and produce a beautiful poem which was perfected at the age of twenty-nine ; the first part of which was printed in 1577, so that he holds a distinguished rank amongst the poets of the golden age, though I had not mentioned him before ; as does also Don Francisco de Borja prince of Equilache, knight of  
the

the golden fleece, and viceroy of Peru till the death of Philip the 3d, in 1621, on receiving news of which, he embarked for Spain, and retired to Valencia, his native country, tho' he went again to the court of Madrid, where he died in his 80th year. In his leisure hours, he principally devoted himself to the muses, and chiefly excelled in lyric compositions, in-  
 somuch that he has been classed amongst the nine muses of Spain, which, with himself consisted of Garcilaso de la Vega, Villegas, Quevedo, the count de Rebolledo, the two Argensolas, Lewis de Leon, and Lope de Vega.

I say nothing to you of the fine collection of Arabic manuscripts, in  
 the

the library of the Escorial, many of which are curiously painted and emblazoned: Were I to speak to you of a sister art, or had I the musical talents of a Burney, I might give you a further description of a curious book in this collection, being a treatise upon music, with designs of upwards of thirty different musical instruments, which would give infinite pleasure to the lovers of that fine art, if there were any means of obtaining a copy of them, in order to acquire a more perfect knowledge of the state of music in this country under the dominion of the Arabs. The authors name is *Abbi Nassar Ben Mahommed Alpharaibi*, with the following title, as translated by Casiri, the

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king's librarian, in his account of these manuscripts :

Nº. C M V I.

*Abbi Nassar Ben Mahommed Alpharaibi,*

*MUSICES ELEMENTA;*

*Adjectis notis musicis et instrumentorum figuris  
plus triginta, &c.*

After a long conversation in this library with an ingenious friend, who is a passionate admirer of Cervantes, we were going away highly pleased, when the librarian who attended us with much courtesy and good manners, recalled our attention to a small chest of antient coins, which he acknowledged to have no extraordinary merit; but they had a very singular one in my eyes, as I discovered them to have belonged to the great archbishop of Tarragona,

Don

Don Antonio Agustín, (whose curious library is also here) and to have been the original coins which served him to draw up those learned dialogues on medals, so universally admired in all countries, and which have been translated into italian and latin.—I was pleased to see there, a coin of the island of Rhodes, with the head of the famous Colossus, and the name of the city stamped on it, ΡΟΔΙΟΝ, which the archbishop tells us, in dialogue the second; they shewed him at Rome in the church of *Santa Croce di Gierusalemme*, as one of the thirty pieces of money with which Judas betrayed our Saviour; but this had little effect on the learned prelate, who states the improbability thereof, and that Judas was more likely to have been paid

with *Sicles*, or other coin of the country, as he was rewarded out of the money belonging to the public treasury. The observation that follows I shall give you in the archbishop's own words : " B. Why then do they hold this coin as a relic in Rome? A. For the same reason they have at the convent of Poblet (*in Catalonia*) for shewing a large dice four times as large as the common ones, and of a jasper colour, which they say is one of those, with which the soldiers played for the garments of our Lord ; all these kind of things are very uncertain, and do not deserve so good a name as relics, since they were used as instruments of sin."--But I am again falling into digressions ;

indulge

indulge me with one reflection more before I quit this desultory letter; and that is, that after reviewing such a variety of commentators which the Spanish language affords, I lament that the great Cervantes is no longer understood by his countrymen, and that this classic writer, so well acquainted with the inmost recesses of the human heart, and who abounds with the most beautiful allegories, yet remains without a single commentator!—Let me exhort you then to continue your attention to this great author, in whom nature herself speaks her own language, and I hope when I have the pleasure of seeing you again, I may without being a minister of state, or yourself a suitor for

court favour, make you the same compliment which the earl of Oxford did to Rowe the poet, and give you joy that you can read Don Quixote in the original.

## LETTER XIV.

*Revolutions and progress of the Spanish Drama.*

MADRID, August 6th, 1778.

**I**N the present critical moment, it is impossible for an Englishman to be lukewarm, who has a true love for his country.—Though our enemies were ever so numerous, we surely are equal to dangers, let them be ever so great.—A thousand duties call me home, I long to be with you, and to take a more active part in this noble struggle; you have my best wishes, that such vigorous exertions may be crowned with success; I cannot submit to the idea of yielding even the length of a wave on our natural

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element:

element : Oh fairest island ! may thy dominion ever be acknowledged, and thy spirit of freedom, commerce and happiness, be revered and admired till time shall be no more !

---In this pensive strain I saunter through the streets of Madrid, take my evening's walk in the *Prado*, and then return home, and prepare matters for my departure from hence : but I have hitherto said nothing to you of the theatre, and you will of course expect something on that subject. If you will give me leave, I will take up the subject from a very early date, since I have seen the stately remains of an ancient Roman theatre at Morviedro, near Valencia, which shews that these entertainments were known in Spain under the Romans,

mans, though we cannot ascertain at what period. If you believe the report of Philostratus, in his life of Apollonius Tyanæus, the inhabitants of Boetica had never seen any theatrical entertainments, and when a few indigent strollers first appeared amongst them, they gazed with the utmost astonishment at their awkward gestures; the citizens of *Ipula* in particular were so astonished at a tragedy performed by these actors, that the audience stood aghast, and considered them as so many fiends, from whom they fled with the utmost precipitancy; all which is supposed to have happened under the reign of Nero. Be this as it may, most probably they totally ceased under the ravaging hand of the goth: at last  
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the Trobadours revived the Roman spirit, which extended itself to the kingdom of Aragon, with the dramatic muse in the days of the marquis of Villena, and at its union to Castile, began to dawn in this latter kingdom.

The *Cancionero* of the poet Juan de la Encina, contains many dramatic pieces of his, acted during Christmas, Shrovetide, and Easter, in the house of the Duke of Alva. These entertainments not only consisted of pastoral dialogues, and subjects of love, but were moreover adapted to the sacred page, and represented the passion of our saviour and other parts of scripture, but such pieces could give but a feeble idea of the powers of the drama; as to their  
other

other performances, the actors were mostly dissolute men; incapable, from the depravity of their manners to feel the delicate sentiments of the Greek or Roman muse, or those noble passions which inflame a generous mind; much less to represent their effects: so that the compositions of the times were suitable to the turn of the actors, and restricted to scenes of low life, similar to those manners which constituted their principal characters. These gave origin to that noted one of the *Celestina*, in the tragi-comedy of *Calixto* and *Melibeá*, translated long since into English, under the title of *The Spanish rogue*, a piece totally unworthy of the stage, in which vice is depicted in such lively colours and immorality so openly exhibited, as

to

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to excite our utmost indignation. Its author is unknown, though from its classic language some have attributed it to Juan de Mena, others to Roderic de Cota. The original piece had only one act, and was afterwards compleated by Fernando de Rocas. It was first written in prose, then turned into verse by Juan de Sedenio at Salamanca, in 1540. It has been twice translated into French, first by an anonymous hand at Lyons in 1529, and reprinted at Paris in 1542, where it was again translated by Thomas Laverdin in 1598. The same dissolute temper infected the Portuguese drama; the comedies of George Ferreira Vasconcellos, after they were printed at Evora in 1566, were immediately suppressed; in other re-  
spect

spects he united the comic powers of Plautus and Terence; they were translated into Spanish at Madrid in 1631, by Don Fernando Ballestros y Saavedro, and have been again reprinted here in 1735, by Don Blas Naffarre, under the feigned name of Don Domingo Ferruno Quexilloso.—While the Spanish drama laboured under all these disadvantages, a new Roscius arose in the person of Lope de Rueda of Seville, whose pieces do honour to his memory, as well as his theatrical abilities as a performer; he was a gold-beater by trade, and it is praise sufficient for him that Cervantes, who was his contemporary, has spoken highly in his favour, adding that none had equalled him as an actor, or in the natural turn of his

his dialogue, and justness of character. His prologues and interludes are distinguished by the name of *passos*, which shews the antiquity of those compositions known at present by the names of *Loas*, *Entremeses* and *Saenetes*.—Alonso de la Vega succeeded Rueda as a writer and a performer, but is much inferior to him as a writer. His *Tholomea* consists of eight scenes, but his *Duquesa de la Rosa* is not divided into scenes or acts, and forms one continued series.

The stage in those days made a very mean and inconsiderable figure; Cervantes informs us, that in the time of Lope de Rueda all the apparatus of a theatre might be wrapped up in a bag, being nothing more than

than four gilt leather skins, as many false beards and heads of hair, with three or four slaves. Comedies were then nothing more than pastoral dialogues between shepherds and shepherdesses, with interludes, in which the ribaldry of a negro, the boasts of a coward, and the blunders of a Biscayner, like the bulls of our *Teague*, form the principal part, and we owe to them our *Bobadil*, a name nevertheless of great renown in Spain, as *Falstaff* certainly was in England, till it fell under the displeasure of Shakespeare. Lope de Rueda was admirable in all these characters, and doubtless would have made an excellent *Abel Drugger*, though inferior in other respects to the great Roscius with us. In those days there were no changes of scenes, no battles

battles with horse and foot between christians and moors, no passages for the actors in the centre of the stage, the whole of which consisted of a few boards laid over benches, no machinery of any kind, an old curtain drawn across, divided the part where the actors were to dress, and where the musicians sung without the assistance of instruments.—Lope de Rueda died at Cordova, and in consideration of his great merit was interred in the cathedral between the two choirs near the famous jester Luis Lopez. As an actor he had a successor in Naharro of Toledo, who imitated Rueda in the low comic. The bag was replaced by trunks to hold the additional furniture, he placed the musicians before the stage, abolished the  
general

general use of false beards, reserving them for their true characters; he introduced battles, clouds, thunder, lightning, storms, and shipwreck. As a writer, Rueda was followed by Christoval de Castillejo, and were it not for want of decency, his pieces would be excellent, particularly the *Constanza*, which is in manuscript in the Escorial. After this a more polite genius, Juan de la Cueva, of Seville, improved the Spanish stage, and greatly refined the language of the drama, by his soft and melodious numbers. His theatrical pieces were acted at Seville in 1579, and printed there in 1588.-----I come now to speak of the great author of Don Quixote as a play-writer.——The

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title



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titles of his plays are *La Gran Turquesca*, *La Batalla Naval*, *La Jerusalem*, *La Amaranta o Mayo*, *El Bosque Amoroso*, *La Arjenda*, and *La Confusa*, printed at Madrid in 1615, and reprinted in 1740. He was the first who divided the drama into three *Jornadas*, or acts, and was a strenuous assertor of the true taste of the ancients; on which account he attacked Lope de Vega with all his might, but the popular applause was too great in favour of his antagonist, who ingratiated himself so much with the people by indulging their versatile humour, added to his exuberance of fancy, and the justness of his characters, that he carried all before him, like an impetuous torrent breaking down all the barriers of opposition:

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by which means, as another Shakespear, Lope de Vega acquired universal admiration. The fecundity of his genius was so great, and his productions so rapid, that he did not give leisure to the public to distinguish the efforts of genius from the wild sallies of intemperate fancy; nor could the several attacks of Cervantes, Villegas, Christoval de Mesa, and others, prevail against this favourite bard.---His successors copied his defects without possessing his beauties; Calderon, who came after him, gave the finishing hand to the fatal plan of Lope, and with the same advantages of language and wit, perverted the minds of the people. His scenes are repeated triumphs of vice, in which the fair sex are taught to

sacrifice every thing to the impressions of love, to despise the advice of tender parents, and yield to the insidious arts of seducers. He gives every encouragement to licentiousness and revel, and his wit was the more dangerous from being delivered with the most beautiful expression ; his plots are well laid and ingeniously supported, all which in such able hands might have been applied to the most laudable purposes ; though some of his plays have been more correct and escaped the general censure. Solis is not inferior to Calderon in elegance and style, particularly in *La Gitanilla de Madrid*, *El Alcazar del Secreto*, and *Un Bobo haze ciento*. Some of Moreto's comedies are not without merit, such as *El desden con el desden*,

to

to which may be added, *El Hechizado por fuerza*, written by Zamora, also his *Castigo de la miseria*, and some others, that do honour to his memory.

With respect to tragedy, they date it from the end of the 15th century, or beginning of the 16th, when Vasco Diaz Tanco de Fregenal produced three tragedies that never were printed, wherein they may dispute the palm with the italians, who have none of an earlier date than the *Sophiniba* of Treffino, and another on the same subject in 1502, by Galeoto, marquiss of Carreto. To these may be added, the tragedies of Hernan Perez de Oliva, printed in 1586, *La Vengenza de Agamemnon* and *La Hecuba Triste*, composed on the model of the

greeks. The two tragedies of *Nise Lastimosa* and *Nise Laureada*, by Bermudez, published in 1577, have not only great variety of versification and harmony of numbers, but infinite merit in their compositions; the same may be said of the tragedies of Juan de la Cueva; as for those of Gabriel Lasso, they fall much short of the former, either in language or invention. Cervantes praises those of *La Isabela*, *La Filis* and *La Alexandra*, which were written by Lupercio de Argensola.

In 1609 five tragedies of Christoval de Virues were printed, which had but a middling reputation, no more than that of the *Pompeyo* of Christoval de Mesa in 1618: as to

Lope

Lope de Vega, I reserve myself to speak to you more fully concerning him in my next letter.-----Little can be said in favour of the tragedy of *Dona Ines de Castro*, by Mexia de la Cerda, or *Los Siete Infantes de Lara*, by Zarate, in 1651, which, with some other pieces void of particular merit, brings us near to the demise of Charles the 2d.

Since the accession of the House of Bourbon, the tragic muse has been chaster, and the genius of the French drama has rendered them more correct. Don Augustin de Montiano, in his tragedies of *Virginia*, and *Ataulpho*, published in 1750 and 1753, may be stiled the Spanish Sophocles, and be said to be equal to

Corneille and Racine in the justness of the drama, uniting the fire of the Gallic eagle with the melody of the swan. Mr. Hermilly has translated his *Virginia* into French, as well as his first discourse upon Spanish tragedy which precedes it, and to him I must refer you for the present.

Adieu !

LETTER XV.

*Sketch of the life and character of the famous poet Lope de Vega.*

MADRID, August 15th, 1778.

**T**HOUGH I perfectly agree with you in opinion relating to our immortal Shakespeare, yet I cannot refrain from doing that justice to his contemporary Lope de Vega which his most extraordinary talents deserve ; I shall therefore attempt to give you the character of this great poet, which is no easy task when his amazing abilities are considered ; however, I shall venture to proceed as this will be the last letter I shall write to you from hence.

Lope



Lope Felix de Vega Carpio, born the 25th November 1562, was the son of Felix Vega de Carpio, a gentleman of Madrid, who had the reputation of being a very good poet, a turn which he observed with rapture in his child from its infancy, and which the fond parent cherished with the greatest delight. At five years of age young Lope could read spanish and latin fluently, and even make verses which he exchanged with his school-fellows for pictures and other trifles. His father, charmed with this surprizing dawn of genius, spared no pains to cultivate a darling plant that seemed to encourage the most flattering expectations. At the age of twelve, Lope was master of the latin tongue and the art of rhetoric; could  
dance

dance and fence with ease and dexterity, and sing with a tolerable taste. ---Endowed with these accomplishments, he became an orphan at his first entrance into the world with every pressure of distress, and was taken into the service of the bishop of Avila, in whose praise he wrote several pastorals, and made his first dramatic essay, with a comedy intitled *La Pastoral de Jacinto*. He soon after quitted his patron, went to the university of Alcala, where he studied philosophy, and took a degree, then returned to Madrid and became secretary to the Duke of Alva, who entrusted him with his most weighty concerns. Encouraged by his new Mecenas, he again tuned his lyre, and sung his praise in a poem intitled

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tled *Arcadia*. About this time he married Dona Isabela de Urbina, a lady of fashion, on account of whose gallantries he soon after fought a duel, and having grievously wounded his antagonist, fled to Valencia, where he lived some years; after which he returned again to Madrid, where losing his wife, he felt himself animated with a military ardour, and repaired to Cadiz to embark on board the great armada, fitting out by Philip the 2d, against Queen Elizabeth. In this fleet he sailed for Lisbon in company with his brother, a lieutenant in the spanish navy, who lost his life in that expedition. Our poet had his share of the misfortunes of that disappointed fleet, and appeared at Madrid without a single friend,  
became

became secretary to the marquiss of Malpica, and afterwards to the count of Lemos. Though his first marriage was so unsuccessful, he was in hopes of being more fortunate in that state with Dona Juana de Guardia, a lady of rank whom he soon after lost. Inconsolable at these repeated afflictions, he entered into the ecclesiastic state, was ordained a priest and appointed head chaplain to a congregation of priests at Madrid, though he still courted the muses, making this the chief relaxation that softened his sorrows. He was now in the zenith of his poetic glory, and his reputation became so universal, that pope Urban the eighth sent him the degree of doctor in divinity, and the cross of the order of Malta,

Malta, added to a lucrative post in the apostolic exchequer, which Lope held to his death, which happened in his seventy-third year, to the great regret of the court, and every learned man in the kingdom. The duke of Sesa, who was his patron and executor, caused him to be interred at his own expence with such pomp and magnificence as had never been seen before for a private person ; the duke invited all the grandees of the kingdom, who attended in person, in token of their concern at the loss of so distinguished a character. The funeral obsequies lasted three days, all the clergy of the king's chapel assisted, three bishops officiated pontifically, and three of the most eloquent orators exerted themselves in  
praise

praise of the deceased, adding new laurels to the fame of Lope de Vega, with whom, when living, many princes gloried in being acquainted. Pope Urban wrote him a letter in answer to a dedication of his poem in favour of Mary queen of Scots, intitled *Corona tragica de Maria Stuardo*. Cardinal Barbarini held a very intimate correspondence with him, as did many other cardinals and noblemen, who courted his friendship. When he walked in the streets, he was gazed upon and followed as a prodigy, he was, moreover, loaded with presents, and by the rapid sale of his numerous works soon amassed a considerable fortune, and acquired a capital of 150.000 ducats, besides his annual income of fifteen hundred

hundred ducats, arising out of his benefices and employments ; so great was the fertility of his genius, the amazing readiness of his wit and rapidity of thought, added to his animated expression, that perhaps there never was a poet in the world, either antient or modern, that could be compared to him.—His lyric compositions and fugitive pieces, with his prose essays, form a collection of fifty volumes, besides his dramatic works, which make twenty-six volumes more ; exclusive of four hundred scriptural dramatic pieces, called in Spain *Autos Sacramentales*, all which were successively brought on the stage ; and what is still more extraordinary, speaking of his printed works, in one of his pastorals to

*Claudio*

*Claudio* he says they form the least part of what still remained in his closet. It appears from his own authority, that he used constantly to write five sheets a day, which multiplied by the days of his life, would make 133,225 sheets; then reckoning the number of verses corresponding to each sheet, it will appear that exclusive of prose he wrote 21,316,000 verses, an unheard of exertion and facility of versification! Our author possessing an inexhaustible fund, which like the fire of Vesuvius, continually afforded new matter, and blazed out incessantly. So extraordinary was the rapidity of his genius, he would often finish a play in twenty-four hours, and some comedies in less than five hours, with as much correctness and

S

elegance



elegance in his verse, as the most laboured pieces of other writers of his time. Such was the contemporary of Sir Philip Sidney, Shakespeare, and Spencer ; in his *Laurel de Apollo* he has celebrated all the good poets of his time, but none were more universally praised from all parts than himself ; his surprising faculties were such, that in his dramatic pieces he broke through all rules of art, yet such was his success, that he was constantly the favourite of the public, and drew perpetual bursts of applause.---It was not his fault if his successors had not his talents to conceal their defects, and only imitated his imperfections, rendering the Spanish drama insupportable when deprived

deprived of the beauties of Lope : this was foreseen by Cervantes, who reproaches our poet with destroying the rules of the drama, as laid down by the ancients, in order to court popular applause ; to obtain which he lost sight of every idea of nature, or good taste, adding, that the probability of fable dwindled in his hands, and was wasted away by the enchanting magic of verse ; all unity of time and place was annihilated ; his heroes came out of their cradles, and wandered from east or west as lovers or combatants, put on the cowl of monks, died in cloysters, and worked miracles on the stage. The scene is transported from Italy to Flanders, and as easily shifted from Valencia to Mexico. Footmen discourse like

courtiers, princes like bullies, and ladies like chambermaids. The actors appear in legions, often seventy at a time, and close with numerous processions, which is still kept up with us, as well as opening graves, and burying the dead, performing the most awful rites of mortality by way of amusement, which for my part I must own makes my heart recoil at the dismal sight ; nor can the most captivating language of Shakespeare overcome my feelings at this glaring indecorum.

So sensible was Lope of the wildness of his imagination, and how wantonly he sported with the confidence of the public, that speaking of himself,

himself, he acknowledges his fault in the following words :

Mas ninguno de todos llamar puedo  
Mas barbaro que yo, pues contra el arte  
Me atrevo a dar preceptos, y me dexo  
Llevar de la vulgar corriente, a donde  
Me llaman ignorante, Italia y Francia.

And again,

Y escrivo por el arte, que inventaron  
Los que el vulgar aplauso pretendieron  
Porque como los paga el vulgo, es Justo  
Hablarle en necio, para darle gusto.

That is, "that he was sensible of the reproaches Italy and France would make him for breaking through all rules to please the ignorant public, but since it was they, that paid for it, they had a right to be pleased in their own way."

I have now given you both sides of the question, respecting this great man ; were I to speak to you of his personal virtues, they are yet superior to his literary talents. His benevolence and charity towards the indigent and distressed was so great, that he always extended his hand to the needy, insomuch that notwithstanding his considerable fortune and income, not more than six thousand ducats were found at his death.—O illustrious bard, if an Englishman is not capable of doing justice to thy poetical numbers, and the harmony of thy verse, accept at least of this tribute to the goodness of thy heart.

LETTER XVI.

*City of Burgos. Tomb of the Cid, and of king  
John the Second.*

BURGOS, 15th August, 1778.

THE next day after I had the pleasure of addressing my last letter to you, I set out from the town of Madrid, and passing through Segovia and Valladolid, arrived at the antient city of Burgos, where I propose making a halt for a few days, to enjoy a little rest after a fatiguing journey, and to look about me in this venerable city, dwindled from its former splendour, but still the residence of many noble families, il-

lustrious for their lineage and military atchievements.—In this city Edward, of England, eldest son of our king Henry the 3d, was knighted in 1254, by king Alfonso the wife, and married the princess Eleanor of Castile, that amiable woman, who when her husband was wounded with a poisoned arrow in Palestine, sucked the venom out of the wound, and restored him to health. Nor was the English nation wanting in acknowledgments to this affectionate princess, who dying of a fever on her journey to Scotland, was conveyed to Westminster with great funeral pomp, and elegant stone crosses were erected at each place where the corpse rested.—The cathedral of Burgos is a most magnificent structure in the gothic

thic taste, and has a great resemblance to York minster.—As this is the country of that famous Spanish hero Roderic Diaz de Bivar, commonly called the *Cid*, who lived in the days of Ferdinand the 1st, I did not forget to visit his shrine at the church of *San Pedro de Cardena*, about six miles from hence, belonging to the benedictine monks ; I went there with the same curiosity as I should to view the tomb of Guy earl of Warwick, or any of our renowned English champions.--I accordingly mounted my courser with becoming gravity, and repaired to his tomb, which is in a particular chapel of the church of San Pedro, with the arms of all his relations depicted on the walls, and a long scroll of his genealogy and exploits.



exploits. In the vestry they have an original portrait of him, done immediately after his death.—His memory is held in such veneration, that the good man, who shewed me every thing, twice called him a saint, but stopped short and corrected himself. No warrior, however, has had so much said of him; he has a separate chronicle of his life and actions, in one volume in folio, printed in 1552 by command of the infant Don Ferdinand afterwards emperor, who gave this commission to Velerado abbot of the convent of San Pedro. The writer says he extracted it from the original chronicle in the archives of that house; but in that he is mistaken, for it was not an original but an antient copy according to the testimony  
of

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of Berganza, a monk of the same house, who about twenty years ago, published its antiquities, in two volumes in folio, and supposes that the original chronicle of the Cid was first written in arabic, by a converted moor, with his son, who were servants to the Cid, and was afterwards translated into Spanish. The archbishop of Toledo, and Don Lucas de Tuy, are spoken of in this chronicle, tho' they flourished in the middle of the 13th century, and the Cid died in 1099, therefore this chronicle must have been continued by another hand as father Sarmiento observes, but without impeaching the veracity of its contents. The general chronicle of Spain was compiled by order of Alfonso the wise, yet whoever

ever reads what is said of the Cid, and *vice versa*, will doubt whether the general chronicle was copied from that of the Cid, or the latter from the former: but they still have their share of merit as far as they elucidate the manners and customs of the times, when divested of the fables and superstition with which they are clouded. Since the burning of Don Quixote's library, not only romances but many of the chronicles are become very scarce, and they are now reprinting a general collection of them at Madrid.— In vain have I searched for *Artus de Bretano*, who was turned into a crow, since which time no Englishman, according to Cervantes, will ever kill a crow. The elucidation

tion of this point I must leave to yourself.

To return to the Cid, every thing belonging to this great warrior is sacred; his swords are admired and shewn as great curiosities; one of them is in the king's armoury at Madrid, and is called *Colada*, in allusion to its fine temper; on one side it has these four letters *SI SI*. and on the other *NO NO*. According to Garibay the historian, the Cid took this sword from the Count of Barcelona, when in arms against the king of Aragon.--The other sword was called the *Tizona*, "The flaming sword," which he wrested from Bucar lord of Tunis. This sword belonged afterwards to the Infant Don Ramiro of Navarre,

Navarre, from whose house it was given to the family of Peralta: Sandoval, bishop of Pamplona, in his chronicle describes this sword which he saw, and says, on one side it had these words *Yo soy la Tizona que fue hecha en la era de mil y quarenta*. On the other side *Ave Maria gratia plena. Dominus.*—The Cid was descended from Lain Calvo, one of the judges of Castile: he left two daughters, Dona Sola, married to the Infant Don Pedro eldest son of Peter king of Aragon, and Dona Elvina to Don Ramon Sancho, eldest son of Sancho Garcias king of Navarre. His panegyrists have entered into endless details in his praise; even his horse *Babieca* has not been omitted, and is said to have lived forty-four years. Having taken  
a solemn

a solemn farewell of this mansion, which was built on the remains of a palace belonging to this hero, I returned back to Burgos, striking off a little to the right, to visit *Miraflores* a convent of Carthusians, given to that order by John the 2d king of Castile, who is interred in their church before the great altar, and has a beautiful marble monument adorned with infinite workmanship: This tomb the people call here a *pantheon*.—I saw in the choir, an original portrait of his daughter Isabella queen of Castile, who appears to have been very handsome. There is a full length picture of her in the palace of Buen Retiro at Madrid.—You will say that I have quitted my ground since I have penetrated into old Castile,

tile, and have deserted the poets for the chronicles, but allow me this digression in favour of a hero who inspired the great Corneille, and furnished a subject for the sublime genius of that celebrated poet.--What would the bold Cid say, if he was to appear again on the horizon? If he, who to preserve his precedence broke the chair of the French ambassador in the presence of the pope, was to see his own countrymen making peace with the moors, and soliciting leave of the pope to eat fish in lent. Not like the devout heroes of those and subsequent times, when the English and French, according to Rapin, fought a bloody battle just before lent, to intercept a convoy of fish, and numbers

bers lost their lives to ascertain who should dine on a herring.

☞ In the reign of Henry VI. when John Duke of Bedford was regent of France in 1429, he sent from Paris to the English army then besieging Orleans, a convoy of salt fish, the lent season being come, which with the artillery and ammunition, made near five hundred carts, under the command of sir John Fastolf, one of the bravest generals in the English army. The convoy was attacked on the road to Orleans, by the French under the count of Clermont, at the head of three thousand men, but they were repulsed with great slaughter by the English, losing six score lords and about six hundred men. This action was called "The battle of Herrings."



## L E T T E R      X V I I .

*Privileges of the different orders of nobility  
in Spain.*

B U R G O S , 4th SEPT. 1778.

**Y**OU ask me what sort of figure the country gentlemen make in Spain, and who are the people stiled *Hidalgos*. To the first I shall answer that as the *Cortes*, or parliaments have been abolished ever since the accession of the house of Bourbon, all the consequence of the country gentlemen has ceased. The *Hidalgos* claim a descent from those valiant soldiers who retired into Castile, and the mountains of Asturias, and other remote

more parts of Spain, on the invasion of the moors, where having fortified themselves, they successively descended into the plains, in proportion to the success of their arms ; --- from the notoriety of their persons, or the lands they became possessed of, they acquired the appellation of *Hidalgos notorios*, *Hidalgos de solar conocido*, or *de casa solariega* ; of these according to Hernando Mexia, there are three sorts, the 1st. being lords of places, villages, towns, or castles, from whence they took their surnames, as the Guzmans, Mendozas, Laras, Guivara's, and others ; the 2nd, who recovered any fortresses from the moors, as the *Ponces of Leon*, and others ; and the third sort, from the places where they resided or held jurisdiction, as

Rodrigo de Narvaez was called of Antequera, from being *Alcayde* there. But this definition is not considered as exact or conclusive by Otalora, another civilian, who says that the true meaning of *Hidalgos de solar conocido* is explained by the laws of Castile, to be a well known mansion or possession, the nature of which is particularly explained in the laws of the *partidas*, lib. 5. tit. 35. which describe three sorts of tenures called *Devifa*, *Solarięa* and *Behetria*. By the first, lands are devised by the ancestor, *solar* is a tenure upon another person's manor, and obliges the owner to receive the lord of the fee when necessity obliges him to travel, and *Behetria* is in the nature of an *allodium*.

In proportion as these Aborigines gained ground on the Moors, and increased in their numbers, many private persons distinguished themselves by their valour, and obtained testimonies of their services, called *cartas de merced*, which served them as a foundation of their birth and good descent, without which documents their posterity could not make it appear; and if from a lapse of time, or other unavoidable accidents, such proof should happen to be lost, or destroyed, the law affords them a remedy under these circumstances, by a declaration importing, that such persons as are supposed to have had such certificates, may be relieved by making it appear, that their ancestors, time immemorial, have always

been held and reputed as *Hidalgos*, and enjoyed the privileges of such, from a strong presumption in their favour; the possession of land having equal force to any other document, which is fully set forth in the *pragmatica* of Cordova. To these executory letters are granted, *cartas executorias*, expressive of their privileges, and for the better regulation of these matters, proper officers are appointed in the chancery courts, called *alcaldes de lor hidalgos*, who ought to be *hidalgos* themselves, and hold jurisdiction in these cases, and no others; but even here innovations have taken place, for as these grants flow from the sovereign, who is the fountain of honour, some are declared *Hidalgos de sangre*, by right of descent,

fcent,

scient, and others *de privilegio*, or by office, in which, the will of the sovereign has made amends for any deficiency of blood.

There is a set of people near Segovia at a place called Zamarramala, who are exempt from tribute on account of the care they take in sending proper persons every night to the castle of Segovia to keep centinel---one cries out *Vela, vela, hao*, and the other blows a horn, from whence they have been titled *hidalgos by the horn*. In Catalonia those gentlemen who are stiled *Hombresde Pareja*, are considered the same as *hidalgos* in Castile, and were so called from the word *parejar*, to equip, this name being given as a distinction by Bo-

relo the 4th, count of Barcelona, at the siege of that city in 965, who summoning all his vassals to come to his assistance against the moors, nine hundred horsemen well mounted and equipped joined him, and with their aid he took the city, and this appellation has been given in honourable remembrance of this loyal action.

You will of course be desirous to know what are the privileges that these noble Hidalgos enjoy? The principal of them are as follows :

1. The first and greatest privilege which they hold by law is to enjoy all posts of dignity and honour in the church and state, with liberty when churchmen of having a plurality of benefices.

benefices. They are qualified for receiving all orders of knighthood, and are to be preferred in all embassies, governments, and public commissions.

2. When they are examined as witnesses in civil and criminal cases, their depositions are to be taken in their own houses, without being obliged to quit them to go to those of others.

3. In all churches, processions and other public acts or assemblies, they are to have the next place of honour and precedence after the officers of justice, conforming themselves to particular customs.

4. They



4. They are not obliged to accept of any challenge for combat, supposing such were allowed of, but from those who are their equals.

5. Though it is forbid to guardians to purchase the estates of minors, this does not extend to *Hidalgos* in whom the law does not suppose any fraud, and they may purchase them publicly.

6. They are permitted to be seated in courts of justice in presence of the judges, from the respect and honour due to them. They have also seats in the courts of chancery, in consideration of their birth, which gives them a right to be near the persons of princes.

7. Their

7. Their persons are free from arrest for debt, nor can any attachment be laid on their dwelling houses, furniture, apparel, arms, horses, or mules, in immediate use, nor can they make a cession of their estates, nor be distressed in suits of law, further than their circumstances will admit of, but are to be allowed a reasonable and decent maintenance for their support.

8. In cases of imprisonment for criminal matters, they are to be treated differently from others. They are generally confined to their own houses with a safe guard, or under arrest upon their honour, or allowed the city or town they live in, and in particular cases are sent into castles.

9. When

9. When punishments are inflicted for criminal cases, they are to be less severe to them than to others, as they are not to suffer ignominious punishments, such as public shame, whipping, gallies, nor are they to be hanged, but beheaded, except in cases of treason or heresy.----In cases that do not imply a corporal punishment but a pecuniary one, they are treated with more rigour, and pay a larger fine than others.

10. They are not to be put to the rack or torture, except for such heinous crimes as are particularly specified by the laws.

11. When there are title deeds or other writings or papers in which two  
or

or more persons have an equal right or property, and require a particular charge, they are to be given up by preference to the custody of an *Hidalgo*, if any of the parties are such.

12. The daughter of an *Hidalgo* enjoys every privilege of her birth, though married to a commoner, and a woman who is not an *Hidalga*, enjoys all these privileges when she is a widow, following the fortune of her husband.---But if the widow is an *Hidalga*, and the late husband was a commoner, she falls into the state of her husband after his death, though she had the privileges of her birth during his life.

13. They are free from all duties, called *Pechos*, *Pedidos*, *Monedas*, *Marteniegas*

have no barons in Castile, not only does not lose her rank, but conveys her titles to her husband, who holds them in right of his wife.

These are the general privileges which the *Hidalgos* enjoy; there are some others of less consequence, as well as particular grants to certain persons and families. An antient and ridiculous custom is said to be observed by noble ladies who are widows of plebeians, in order to recover their birthright, for which purpose they carry a packfaddle on their shoulders to their husband's grave, then throwing it down and striking it three times, say, "villain, take thy villainy, for I will abide by my nobility," and then they recover their privileges again.

As

As for the titles of marquiss and count, which are called *Titles of Castile*, they seem to be merely honorary, and give much the same rank as our baronets do in England. The merchants of Cadiz seem fond of them, and when they grow rich, they are easily obtained.

The grandees of Spain form the true nobility of the country, and were originally divided into three classes, the first had the privilege of speaking covered in the *cortes* in presence of the king, the second were covered after they had spoken, and the third were only *ad honores*, with the title of excellency, and the privilege of appearing with the others in public assemblies ; since the extinction of the

U

*cortes,*

*cortes*, their privileges have dwindled. When the death of the marquis de Valdermoso was mentioned in the Madrid gazette, of the 6th of April, 1773, as a Grandee of the second class, it was contradicted in the following one, adding that he only enjoyed the title *ad honores*.

The oldest duke in Spain seems to be the duke of Medina Sidonia, which title was first granted by king John the second the 17th of February 1445, to John Alonso de Guzman, third count of Niebla. Our oldest duke at present in England, is descended from Charles Howard, created duke of Norfolk by Richard the third, on June 28th, 1483.

If

If after this, you ask me what sort of a life the *hidalgos* lead? I must inform you, it is much the same with that of Don Diego de Miranda, in Don Quixote, who gave the following account of himself. “ My name is Don  
 “ Diego de Miranda; I am an *hidalgo*,  
 “ and a native of the village, where  
 “ with God’s permission, we shall dine  
 “ to day; my fortune is more than  
 “ moderate, and I live with my wife,  
 “ children and friends; my chief  
 “ amusements are hunting and fish-  
 “ ing, yet I have neither hawks nor  
 “ greyhounds, but some decoy par-  
 “ tridges, and a bold ferret; I have  
 “ about six dozen of books, some in  
 “ Spanish, and others in latin, a few  
 “ of history, and others of devotion;  
 “ those of knight errantry I have not



“ yet suffered to come within my  
 “ doors. I delight (\*) more in pro-

\*All these lines in the text after this mark\* to the end of the paragraph, are omitted in the new translation of Don Quixote, by Charles Henry Wilmot, Esq; London, 1774, as well as those lines which immediately follow here.—

“ Sancho, who was all attention to the account which the *Hidalgo* gave of his life and manners, which seemed to him to be commendable and holy, and that such a good liver ought to work miracles, threw himself off from his ass, and with great hurry ran towards Don Diego, and laid hold of his right stirrup, and with a fervent heart, and tears in his eyes, kissed his foot many times; which being observed by the *Hidalgo*, What are you about brother? he said, what does this mean? permit me to proceed, said Sancho, for your worship seems to me to be the first saint I have ever seen on horseback. I am no saint, answered the gentleman, but a great sinner; but you, good brother, are a worthy man, from the simplicity of your manners. Sancho returned to his saddle, having at last extorted a smile from the truly melancholy aspect of his master, and caused further admiration to Don Diego.—Don Quixote asked him how many children he had, &c.

“ fane

“ fane books than in devout ones,  
 “ provided that they are not immo-  
 “ ral; that the language is elegant,  
 “ and that the mind is captivated  
 “ with the ingenuity of their inven-  
 “ tion, though of these we have few  
 “ in Spain. I sometimes dine with  
 “ my neighbours and friends, and of-  
 “ ten invite them ; my repasts are  
 “ plain and neat, but plenty dwells  
 “ under my roof. I never find fault  
 “ with my acquaintance, nor do I con-  
 “ sent to the murmurs of others in  
 “ my presence. I don’t pry into the  
 “ life and conversation of my neigh-  
 “ bours, nor look sharply into their  
 “ actions. I hear mass every day,  
 “ divide my estate with the poor,  
 “ without making boasts of my cha-  
 “ rity, not to let hypocrisy or vanity

“ take possession of my heart, ene-  
 “ mies that gently steal upon the most  
 “ guarded minds. I endeavour to  
 “ reconcile those who are at variance.  
 “ I am devout to the Virgin Mary,  
 “ and I place my trust in the in-  
 “ finite mercy of God.”

With respect to their lineage, if you  
 want further information, consult  
 Penafiel de Contreras, a famous Spa-  
 nish antiquary, who, in compliment  
 to Philip the 3d, drew up a genealo-  
 gical tree of one hundred and eigh-  
 teen descents, from Adam down to  
 that sovereign ; and, to please the  
 then prime minister, duke of Lerma,  
 of the house of *Guzman*, he formed  
 another pedigree of one hundred and  
 twenty-one descents, also from Adam  
 down

down to the duke, connecting him with the sovereign, in the person of Tros, king of Troy, (great grand father of Priam and Æneas) by his two sons Assaracus and Ilus ; from one of which Philip descended, and the minister from the other ! What a contagious distemper is flattery, and how rapidly it flies from pole to pole. In the north, John Miffen paid a similar compliment, deduced from Adam, to his sovereign the king of Sweden ; and William Slater did as much for James the 1st, king of Great-Britain.

Adieu !

## L E T T E R      XVIII.

*Lordship of Biscay.—Antient poetry in the Vascuense language.*

BILBAO, October 10th, 1778.

**A**FTER travelling over a great many mountains, I at last arrived at this pleasant town, which closes my expedition through the Spanish dominions. As for the antient language of this country called the *Vascuense*, we are the more perplexed and in the dark, as all the books extant in that language are modern ; so that, it is a very difficult matter to give any precise ideas or fix any standard of their tongue, and  
much

much less of their poetry, as the natives seem to have reserved a particular corner of Parnassus to themselves, in which they have neither rivals nor competitors.

If the poem in *Vascuense* mentioned by Argote de Molina in his discourse on Spanish poetry is as antient as the actions which it relates; we should have a tolerable document to form a judgement of the poetry of these people, about the beginning of the fourteenth century, that is towards the year 1320. If we exclude this record, we have no other specimens of their poetry, except some spiritual hymns of Juan de Aramburu, and those of Bernardo de Gazteluzar printed at Pau in 1686, and another

nother anonymous poet mentioned by Larramendi. The most famous of their poets is said to be Juan de Echeverri, a Doctor in Divinity, who composed the life of Christ and of some saints, in this ancient verse, which were printed at Bayonne in 1650.—As for my part I have in vain studied the language in the grammar of Laramendi, and am willing to take the people on their words, who assure me it is very harmonious; nor can I give you any satisfactory account of the antiquity of the inhabitants who are supposed to have peopled Ireland. The irish antiquaries agree that the colonies of Milesians came from Brigantia to Ireland, and O'Flaherty and Keating assert, that Florian de Ocampo an  
old

old Spanish writer, proves in his chronicle, that the Brigantines of Ireland owe their origin to Spain, and so passed into Wales; but for my part, as I am as little versed in the Irish tongue as I am in the Biscayan, it is not in my power to give you any lights on this subject. ---- Who knows? if I had had the good fortune to read the poems of Ossian in the original, perhaps it might have afforded some assistance, and I might have recovered from obscurity some Biscay warrior, like Fingal, who lorded it over these mountains, and perhaps did feats which the most harmonious verses have done justice to, that now lie buried beyond the reach of our most profound antiquaries.

The



The inhabitants of the lordship of Biscay, as a free people, enjoy a great many exclusive rights and privileges, beyond the Castilians, or any other subjects of Spain. These rights are set forth in a folio entitled, *El Fuero de los Cavalleros de Viscaya*, Medina 1575, which book I have sought for in vain, as well as a geographic poem describing the kingdom of Galicia, in alexandrine verse, by Luis de Molina, printed at Mondonedo, in 1550.

An irishman, whose name is William Bowles, who having been employed for these twenty years as an engineer in the king of Spain's service, and has travelled over most parts of Spain, has lately published some very curious

ous memoirs at Madrid, dedicated to the present king of Spain, intended as an introduction to the natural history and physical geography of that kingdom; amongst other things he has given a pretty full account of the genius and manners of the Biscayans, and has taken some pains to draw a comparison between them and the antient irish; but this point still admits of further illustration, from the very precarious foundation of all reasoning, arising merely on a supposed similitude of manners and customs: tho' I readily agree with him in the account he gives of their hospitable disposition and chearful temper, added to the utmost industry in cultivating their rugged mountains, by which means they have rendered the  
greatest

greatest part of their country both pleasant and fruitful. They, moreover, apply themselves closely to foreign commerce and navigation, having been always deemed industrious traders, and expert and skilful mariners, insomuch that for the whale fishery so far back as 1575, the English merchants were obliged to send to Biscay for *men skilful in the catching of the whale, and ordering of the oil; and one cooper, skilful to set up the flaved cask.* It further appears, that we not only lost all memory of that trade for many centuries, which we had known in the days of king Alfred, but that the Biscayans carried it on long before we attempted it again, as well on account of the oil as for the whalebone: the first English ship  
that

that went on that trade into the bay of St. Lawrence, according to Hackluyt, in 1594, found part of the cargo of two Biscay ships that had been wrecked there, three years before. But, because I am drawing nearer to England, you will say, I am again running into digressions, and it matters not, who had that fishery or any other maritime commerce at that time, provided we can hold it at present, and make good the old maxim, *Imperator Maris, Terræ Dominus*.

## L E T T E R     X I X .

*Departure from Bilbao for England by sea. Sentence of the inquisition against Don Pablo de Olavide.*

BILBAO, 10th Dec. 1778.

**I** HAVE been detained in this country longer than I expected, waiting in hopes of a friend who was desirous of coming to England along with me ; this delay, however, has enabled me to furnish you with a very extraordinary piece of news, no less than the sentence of the Inquisition, against an unfortunate gentleman, who at one time was in high favour at court, and from whose abilities the greatest expectations were formed.

You

You may perhaps have heard, some years ago, of the projects of this government to colonise the desert mountains of Sierra Morena, in Andalusia. The *Cedula*, or grant for this undertaking was issued by the king in 1767, and contains 79 articles. The intention of the court was to invite 6000 catholic germans and flemings, who were to be settled there with proper encouragement, in order to introduce agriculture and manufactures, as well as population in that desolate district, for the carrying on of which the inspection and management of the whole was given to Don Pablo de Olavide, *assistente*, or governor of Seville, from whose knowledge and patriotism it was expected a flourishing colony would soon arise; accordingly

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cordingly several towns were built, and the country soon began to wear a new aspect, but unfortunately this gentleman was some time ago taken up at Madrid, hurried away from his house, and confined in the dark prisons of the inquisition, and after a long and painful imprisonment, was brought in the most humiliating manner before his judges, and the following sentence, which I inclose you herewith, pronounced against him, on which I shall make no comments, as your own judgement will give you an idea of the *benevolence* and *liberality* of sentiment that reigned in that assembly; shew you the weight of the charge; the manner by which it is proved, and of course how far he was deserving of the dreadful  
punish-

punishment that followed: by which the prisoner without having his loyalty or fidelity to his sovereign called in question, becomes the most unhappy subject possible and in an infinitely worse state than the most wretched person in the kingdom.

I now lay down my spanish lance, as well as the golden helmet of Mambrino, and am hastening home as fast as possible, reserving only my Toledo blade, made by that famous artist Andrew Ferrara.—The din of war sounds constantly in my ears ; it is too late at present to look back ! If I fall, may it be gloriously in defence of my country, my beloved country, whose rights I fervently wish may ever remain inviolate ! let



who will be the invader.—Methinks I see you cast a disdainful look towards the spanish muse; let me then have recourse to your admired Petrarch, and in bidding farewell to the continent, as I shall embark at this port, I close our correspondence with the following lines of that favourite poet :

Del empia Babilonia ond e fugitta  
 Ogni vergogna, ond ogni bene e fuori,  
 Albergo di dolor, madre d'errori  
 Son fugit io per allungar la vita.

## SPANISH POETRY. 309

*Narrative of an Auto de Fe, held the 27th of November, 1778, in the cause of Paul de Olavide, before Don Joseph Escalzo, and Don Bernardo Loigorri, inquisitors of the court, with the assistance of several persons of rank called to attend thereat, who were not even charged with silence, out of charity, as is customary on similar occasions.*

### P R E S E N T,

Duque de Granada and	Count of Mora
his chaplain Mofa	Duke of Abrantes
Xaraba	Don Joseph Eulate
Cerda	Don Ant. Monsagrati
Don Patricio Bustos	Don Manuel Trevisano
Don Rosendo Paraf-	Don Julian de San
puelo	Christobal
Marquiss de Casa-	El Maestro Virgala
tremanes	Dominico
Duke of Hajar	El Maestro Ibaretta
Marquiss of Belamazan	Benedictino

The abbot of St. Martin The Marquis de la  
Don Juan de la Rosa Hinojosa

The Vicar of Toledo Don Juan Valcarcel Ca-  
Santa Maria nario

Father Cardenas a Ca- Don Antonio Angosto  
puchin Colonel

El Maestro Magin With other persons of  
Mercenarian distinction to the  
Another Maestro of number of forty.  
the same order

“ The accused made his appearance in a yellow robe with a green taper in his hand, and was ordered to sit on a bench opposite to the inquisitors, who had a table before them, covered with the papers relating to the process. One of the secretaries began to read a summary of the cause which was followed by other papers, and continued till noon; at which time they had gone through the whole,

## SPANISH POETRY. 311

whole, having begun at eight in the morning.

“ The depositions of the prisoner were read, taken after his confinement in the prisons of the holy office, in which he divided his life into three epochas. The first comprehends the space of thirty years, in Lima, and in Spain; with respect to his notions, in which though weak and a sinner, he confesses his true and solid sentiments concerning religion, articles of faith, dogmas, rites, and customs of the church; as well as want of that improvement he afterwards acquired in the second period. This includes the space from his tour into foreign parts, where losing his temporal felicity, and jealous of that of others in

Spain, he formed to himself his new maxims; acquired much knowledge in every branch of science, became acquainted with Voltaire and Rousseau, and other free-thinkers, whom he argued with, to see if they could convince him: thus stifling the qualms of his own conscience, he gave himself up to his opinions and pleasures. The third period includes, from the year 1767, down to the present time, when full of pre-occupations, and false ideas of the abuses of the regular and secular clergy; his attention to population; his false notions of the prerogative, causing impediments to the happiness of states; the fetters of religion; and opinions of the Romans; he gave up his whole thoughts to the settling new colonies

colonies in the Sierra Morena ; and taken up with his own ideas, he spoke without reflection, with temerity, with imprudence, urged on by his opponents, concerning the fallibility of the pope, the tribunal of the inquisition, and of all those things which in his opinion might retard or impede his projects : protesting that all, that had been said and reported, had been strained into a different sense by his hearers, and others, who might have been scandalized thereat.

“ These declarations were followed by the depositions of seventy-eight witnesses, who certify separately and jointly all the novelties, we find disseminated amongst the free-thinkers of

## ORIGIN OF

...times; distinguishing persons  
and facts, blasphemies &  
... maintained, and ...  
... their points. Many are  
... he denies, for  
... remember them, o-  
... deliver-  
... authors, in-  
... said in  
... temper of  
... That many were  
... to try the temper of  
... and that he suffered him-  
... with the vain-  
... glory of shining in conversation.—  
To the objections of having said that  
St. Austin was a poor simple man,  
and that Peter Lombard, St. Thomas,  
and St. Bonaventure had retarded  
the progress of science by their scho-  
lastic forms and abstruse manner, he  
palliated

palliated, by saying, that in his opinion, if they had lived in these times, in which the mind has been so much improved by philosophy, they would have reaped greater profit, and when charged with his contempt of the most sacred mysteries, he retorts it upon the abuses of the clergy and hypocrites, on which head he spoke irreverently of confession and paschal communion. In this manner he exculpates himself from a number of accusations, brought against him in the *Plenarium*, wherein 90 witnesses speak more fully and openly.

“ He is moreover convicted by papers of his hand writing, as well as his own letters, which he has solemnly avowed; the spies and stratagems  
have



have been discovered by which, he endeavoured to persuade the witnesses, to recede from their first depositions; also his intercepting and opening the letters of the inquisition and false answers given to hide his secrets and intentions; the confidents employed in these acts, and the instructions given by means of these thefts, and other arts, by which he discovered all the proceedings of the inquisition, and their designs; in a word, every method which human invention could devise to overthrow the proceedings,

“ That *the Roman Emperors were better than many holy kings*, he explains merely with respect to natural virtues. That he ridiculed the religious

ous men of the order of St. Peter of Alcantara when in Rome, who presenting themselves to him on viewing the *Capitol*, he confesses, acknowledging that their poverty and nakedness cooled his enthusiasm in their favour. Of this kind there are an infinity of instances throwing a ridicule on the most sacred subjects. He calls the institution of the Carthusians *barbarous*, and if he preferred the state of matrimony to celibacy and spoke with contempt of the religious vows of an ascetic life, and of continency, it was only to encourage propagation in a holy manner, being so much wanted in Spain: that all he had said, and done, in the new settlements, was to correct the abuse of alms, to encourage labour, and to banish

banish idleness, to which the settlers were prone, under pretence of going to mass, and other devotions in the churches. For his indecent pictures, and his portrait, holding a picture of Vénus and Cupid, he lays the blame on the painters of Geneva, who did them without any orders from him. The enthusiasm of Crusades and the increpations of St. Bernard, who encouraged them so strongly; attributing, the sales made by the faithful of their estates, with hopes of acquiring better in the holy land, *to the intrigues of the clergy, to get possession of them*, he represents, as merely discourse held in the name of those, who asserted such blasphemies in their writings: and the same excuse is given by him, when he  
 is

is convicted of having characterised the order of St. Francis with ignorance, for securing a livelihood at the expence of the public by representing poverty as honourable. In a word, all that St. Evremont declaimed against the institutes of Regulars; with what was published before the councils of Constance and of Trent, and the subtilities of the present times, under a pretext of the public good, and the advantage of the subject; all this, is comprised under different heads in this suit. All that we hear from the literati of the present age, the writings of free thinkers, and what these oracles announce, as proceeding from prepossessions, touching the jurisdiction in no wise coercive of the church; all

all these are proved in the process; many are confessed and many ill excused, which are infinite in number; and time would be wanting, were I to name many other circumstances of this kind. They are more than sufficient to pronounce him a *formal heretic*, to confiscate all his estates, declare him incapable of all honours and dignities; to be banished from the court, royal seats, new colonies, Lima, and Seville 20 leagues round. To be shut up eight years in a convent, where he is to read *The symbol of faith* of Father Luis de Granada, and *The incredulous without excuse*, of Father Seneri, with other less penalties, and to confess his sins once a month. The inquisitor general pardons him from

from the *sambenito* (a), and he appeared in public without his cross of knight-hood of the order of St. James.

(a) The *sambenito*, says a Spanish writer, is a garment covering the breast and shoulders and wore by a reconciled penitent at his trial before the inquisitors. The name is an abbreviation of the words *jarco benedicto*, "blessed garment." In the primitive church penitents were clothed in robes blessed by the bishop or priest, and they stood with them at the door of the church till they had performed their penances, were absolved from their sins and admitted again into the bosom of the church; which custom has been imitated by the inquisition, inso-much that, though in the eyes of the world it is ignominious and affronting; if those that wear it, continues the same profound writer! accept with patience, what may be said of them by the vulgar, it may be of great merit in the sight of God.-----  
*Tefero de la Lengua Castellana*, por "Don Sabastian de Cobarruvias Orozco capellan de Su Magestad consultor del Santo Oficio de la inquisicion. Madrid, 1611

“On hearing the sentence and finding himself declared *a formal heretic*, he said, *not so*, and fell from the bench like one in a fit: he made a solemn abjuration, after a protestation of faith, was absolved from censures, with all the formalities of the sacred canons, and became the greatest object of compassion. He declared in writing, that the utmost rigour was nothing when compared to his wickedness, and all appearances seem to bespeak repentance, but *de occultis non judicat ecclesia!*”

THE END.

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B'D FEB 24 1975



